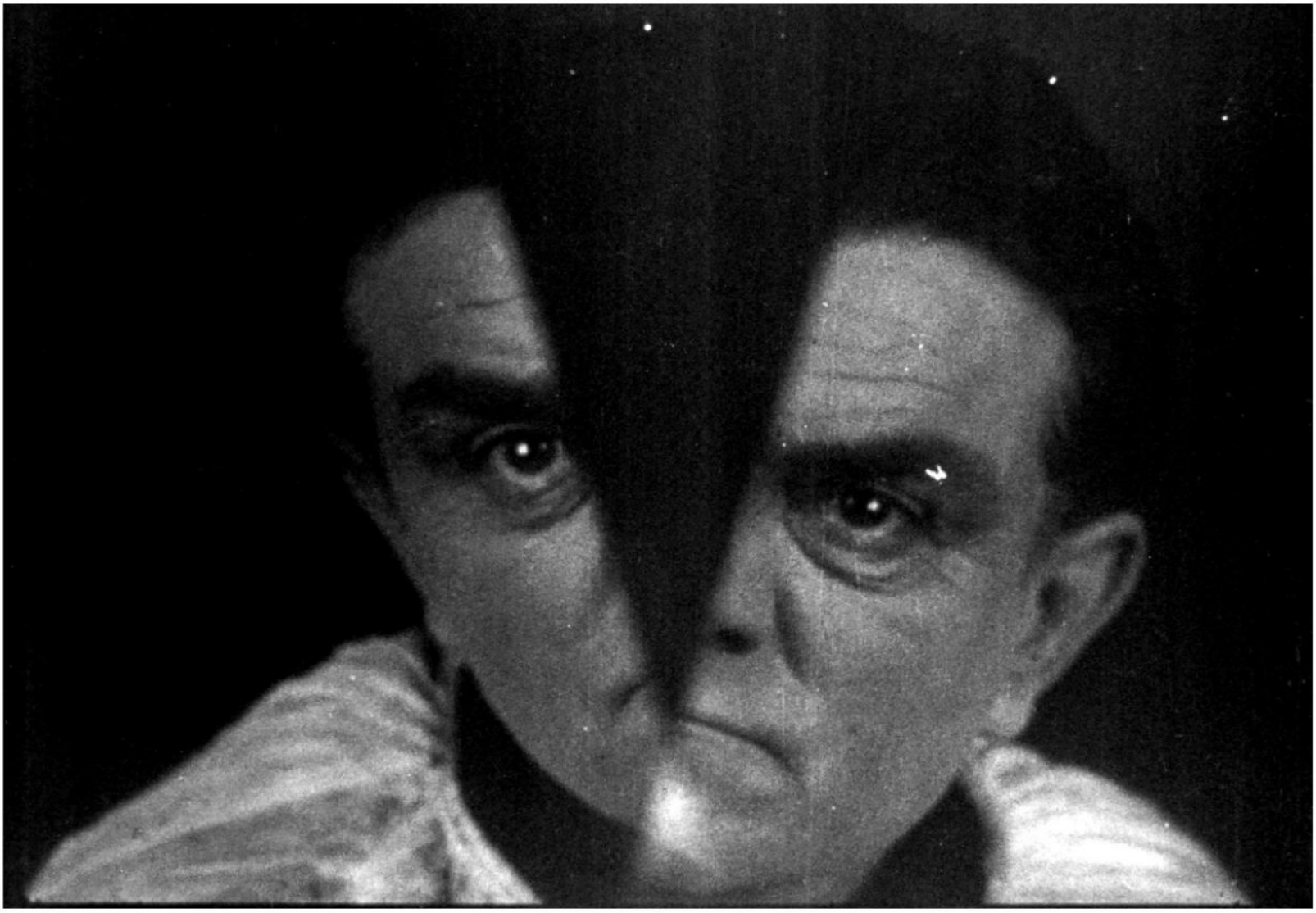
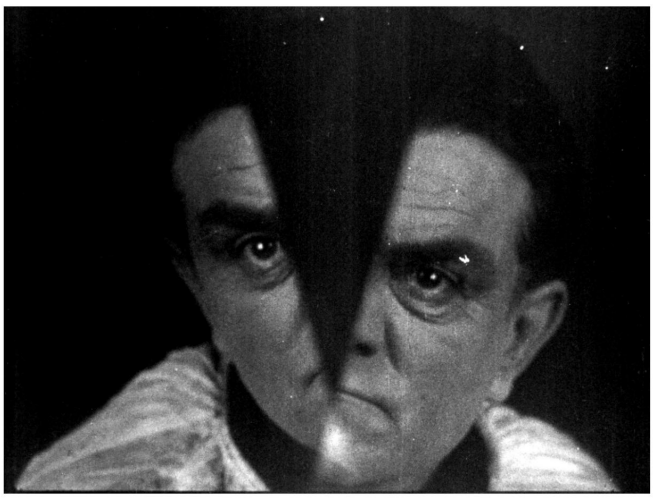




FAQ's

1. **What is this course about?**
    - Movies are not one thing: they are many different things.
        - Movies are a business, a social activity, and an art form.
        - In ways, they are like theater, in ways like stories told around the campfire, in ways like myths--etc.
    - This course will help you to appreciate the rich complexity of movies as a social and cultural phenomenon: showing how movies 'work': how the pieces fit together to shape our experience of watching them.
2. **Why is that important?**
    - Increasingly, both in the U.S. and around the world, people spend *four times more time* watching moving images than they do reading.
        - In 2019 Americans spent about 15 minutes on a weekday reading and 18 minutes on weekends or holidays.
        - Worldwide, over a quarter of adults surveyed watched more than an hour per day watching video online.
        - It would seem like a good idea to be a thoughtful consumer of moving images.
3. **What topics will be covered?**
    - In this course, we'll look at movies from *three main angles*.
        - Movies are part of social institutions: we watch and talk about them with each other.
        - Movies are a linear phenomenon: they are sequential; every movie has a beginning, a middle, and an end (though, as someone once said, not always in that order).
            - They unfold as a flow that holds our attention (or doesn't).
            - They are dramas like a play and stories like a legend.
            - They can also be seen as arguments or as completely abstract patterns of dark and light, noise and silence.
        - And movies also unfold simultaneously or in 'depth': we react to light and to sound, to faces and to voices, simultaneously like

instruments in an orchestra.
        - These are the different techniques of cinema: sound, cinematography, acting, special effects, editing, etc.

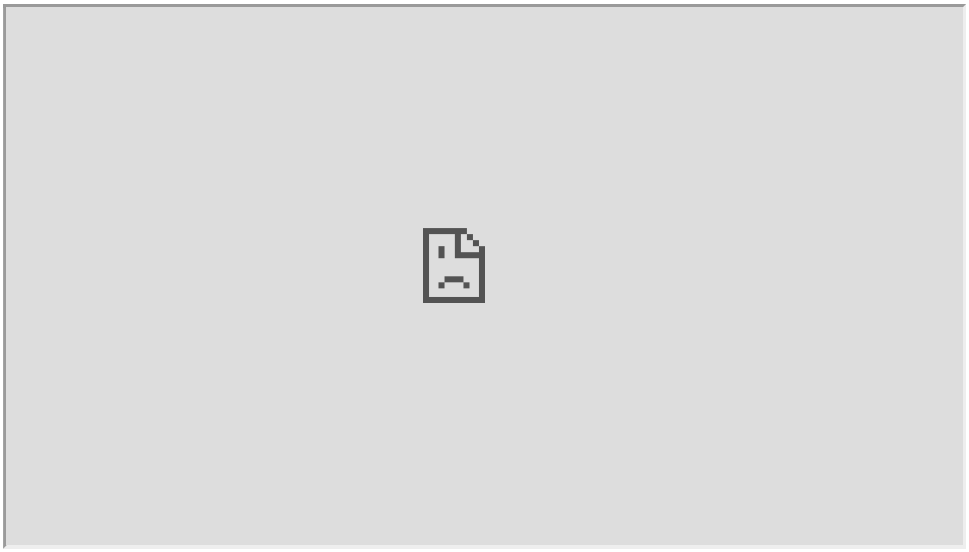
4. **How will the course be organized?**
    - First, you will explore the three main perspectives mentioned above:
        - Movies as a social institution, as linear dramas and stories, and as multidimensional techniques.
    - You will explore these through a film YOU enjoy a lot, and you will then explore the issues in a group organized around a common film.
        - The idea is to practice exploring movies from different angles, and to focus on one or two films to get a 'complete' understanding of them.
    - After you've explored these three big perspectives, you'll watch and reflect on three "great" movies of your choosing.
    - And finally you'll again work in groups to give a complete analysis of a single film the group agrees on--probably a 'great' film you've watched.
5. **How will we learn in this course?**
    - You will pick the movies you want to focus on.
    - You will work individually and in groups.
    - You'll support each other in your learning.
    - You'll blog your thoughts about the movies you study.
6. **How will our work be evaluated?**
    - The course, department, and college have expectations about what you'll get from this course. These include:
        - analyzing films;
        - seeing movies as drama and as performance;
        - appreciating the variety of movies and their complexity as an art form and a social institution;
        - communicating effectively;
        - doing research and developing good strategies for analyzing films; and
        - managing your time, growing as a scholar and writer, and using technology effectively.
    - You will earn points for your work, and the course uses a 4.0 scale--as the college does on your transcripts.

        - 4.0 is A. 3.0 is B. 2.0 is C.
        - 3.7 is A-, 3.3 is B+, etc.
        - This means earning 75% of points is a B.
            - So if you complete 3/4 of the work successfully, you will earn a B.
            - Or if you earn 3/4 of the points on all the work, you will also earn a B.
7. **What will I need to do the work for this course?**
    - The college gives some guidance about success in online courses.
    - For this course, you will need to be able to watch movies that are available via online streaming.
        - You will only need to watch about six movies for this course, and you will have some flexibility in choosing them.
            - Some are available free online.
        - If you can find them in other formats, that will also work.
8. **Is there a textbook?**
    - *You can have your choice of textbooks.* You can buy, rent, or borrow any edition of the following books from the last ten years.
        - Barsam: *Looking at Movies*
        - Bordwell Thompson: *Film Art**
        - Corrigan White: *The Film Experience**
        - Monaco: *How To Read a Film*
        - Nichols: *Engaging Cinema*
    - Ryan and Lenos: *Film Analysis* ($10 on Kindle)
        - Sikov: *Film Studies*
        - Villarejo: *Film Studies The Basics*
        - The following is a free, 'open source' film textbook: Moving Pictures: An Introduction to Cinema(Links to an external site.)
        - This is a more abstruse textbook that can be downloaded as a free pdf:Cinema Studies: Key Concepts(Links to an external site.).
    - (The titles with the * are especially recommended.)
9. **How do I get help with Canvas?**
    - The support manual for Canvas is available online.
    - The college offers Canvas support via phone and email .

10. **How much work will I have to do?**
    - A four-unit course requires 12 hours of work per week.
11. **How often is work due in this course and what happens if my work is late?**
    - Typically, you will have work due Thursdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays.
        - So you will need to visit the Canvas course site at least three times per week.
    - The deadlines are typically 11 pm.
        - It's important to get work done roughly by the deadlines--because your peers need to read your work, and you will need to move on to the next assignment.
        - But nothing tragic will happen if you post the work at 11:01 pm--or even midnight.
        - With this in mind, the deadlines will be described as "11 pm" but the system settings will be 12 hours later--so no one has to plead to have the "Late" tag removed from the assignment.
        - Work will be marked down by 12.5% per day for every 24 hour late.
            - This means you will lose one letter grade for every two days your work is late.
            - One letter grade is not tragic, but this should encourage you not to lose too many letter grades.
12. **How do I join a group?**
    - It's under "People."
    - And there is a Canvas support page for how to join a group.
13. **How do I make a post in WordPress?**
    - Go to the course blog and sign in by adding "wp-login.php" to the url.
        - You'll be in the dashboard.

            - On the lefthand menu go to Posts -- Add New.
            - Copy/paste your text.
            - On the righthand menu:
                - Choose the Category Short Essays
                - And set a featured image.

        - Meet all assignment requirements and the course's Eight Writing Do's and Don't's
    - WordPress has support resources on making posts (and many other topics).
    - Youtube is full of support info--some of it dated.
        - This video shows the steps, although the exact layout of WordPress changes every so often.



0.1 Movies, Cinema, and Film

A Word about Words

We have three words for 'the same thing' but not the same thing: movies, film, and cinema.

- The first is a commodity, a product: something we pay to see.
- The second is a physical or artistic medium.
- The third is a place where we consume movies or the larger social institutions of watching and discussing movies.

In other words:

- Movies are something we spend money on: buy tickets for, buy or rent copies of, stream for money (or not).
- Film is a medium for recording moving images and sound, and that medium can be used for artistic purposes, to use up money, or for many other reasons.
- Cinema is a place we see movies, but that place also represents the institution of movie-going, movie-watching, movie-discussing, movie-critiquing, etc.

Compare:

- A digital file is a physical thing.
- That digital file might be a song: something of value you can buy and pay for--or steal.

- The song and file are also part of musical culture (listening to and playing music) and digital culture (e.g., sharing files).
- And you can compare it to other songs, other music, other pieces of culture: books, movies, clothes.

And is there not a fourth word? Video?

- This is also a medium or a signal: not celluloid but waves or numbers formerly captured on magnetic tape.
- We habitually use this word to refer to moving images we capture ourselves: amateur recordings, often unedited or lightly edited.
- Youtube is full of videos in this sense.
- Some of the most important legal and cultural documents of the last 50 years are without a doubt videos.
- How this fourth word will interact with the other three remains to be seen.

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Questionnaire 0.11 Movies, Cinema, and Film

The same movie can be viewed as a movie, a part of cinema, or a film. That is:

- as a part of the business of making movies to make money,
- as a part of the institutions which shape our habits of watching and talking about movies, and
- as an 'aesthetic experience': a film compared to other films, an exploitation of the medium, a 'callback' to other films.

The following steps and questions are designed to help you wrap your head around the idea of seeing movies from these three perspectives.

1. What are the relevant facts about the movie as a business proposition?
    - How much was spent on it?
    - How much did it make? Domestically? Abroad?
    - For this information, consider checking websites like Box Office Mojo and The Numbers Dot Com.
    - Consider also searching the film's title in a database focusing on newspapers--like Newspaper Source Plus.
2. What can you find out about the film's production and distribution?
    - Was it late? Were there setbacks or delays due to casting? Conflicts among the filmmakers?
    - A search of newspaper databases or a Google or Bing search focusing on "News" should turn up some things.
3. How was the film received?

    - This can also be disclosed by a news search.
    - Metacritic.com can also give you a quick overview of reviews from major newspapers and magazines.
4. Find three critical discussions that seem to you typical or interesting: one journalistic, one scholarly, and one from a fan or ordinary web user.
    - How was the film received? Well? Poorly? As an effective commercial entertainment? As evoking serious moral issues? As artistically innovative?
    - Do articles or fan criticism discuss the experience of seeing the film? Seeing it with family or friends? Lines at theater or their home viewing experience? (E.g., was the Blu-Ray good? How did their speaker system treat the film, or vice-versa?)
    - Which critical discussions treat the movie as a financial proposition, which as a social experience and phenomenon, which as a work of art?
5. What is your history with the movie? How does the movie fit into your relationships and friendship? How is the movie different from other movies for you?
    - Do you remember how you first found out about the movie? When and where did you watch the movie? In a theater? On TV or cable? As a rental? How long ago was that? When the movie came out?
    - How many times have you watched it since? Alone or with others?Do you talk to other people about the movie, and if so, what do you tell them?
    - Re-watch the movie. You might speed through it and just watch some favorite scenes.
        - What feelings does the movie create in you? Does it remind you of other movies?
        - How would you describe what you like about the movie? Its speed? Its humor? Its emotion? The

characters? Etc.

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0.00 Overview of Film Concepts

Film as Institutions, Sequences, Techniques

- **What is film?**
    - It's a trick question.
        - Film is not just one thing.
    - Film is plural and perspectival.
- There are three main perspectives on films
    - Film requires a set of **institutions**:
        - how films are made and consumed,
            - made by individuals, groups, and companies;
            - consumed by critics and scholars and fans,
                - turned into meaning,
                - analyzed for how the pieces fit together: style.
                    - One common ways the pieces fit together is *realism*.
                    - But there are many conventions: for example those that cluster to make westerns, horror films, musicals, etc.
        - All these are institutions: shared assumptions, beliefs, habits.
- Films are **sequential**.
    - They unfold one moment at a time.
    - They organize into chunks.

    - They can be stories, arguments, or more like poems ("purely" audiovisual patterns).

- Films use **techniques**--all at once.
    - They have not just 'length' but also 'depth.' There is:
        - what's in front of the camera: sets, costumes, etc.;
            - acting like in theater;
        - what the camera adds: framing, distance, angle;
        - impossible things created by special effects (FX);
        - not just shots but also editing;
        - not just sights but also sounds.

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1.1 Making Movies: Film Production

Film Production: Phases, Modes, Processes

Phases are steps in the filmmaking process. (You could call them something else: we're just using that term for convenience.)

Films are produced, distributed, and exhibited (shown in theaters and on screens of all sizes). These phases are called:

- production,
- distribution, and
- exhibition.

Production is also contrasted with: **reception**.

- Films are made and then watched, enjoyed, valued, derided, hailed, etc.: produced and 'received.'

Modes of Production are ways people work together or alone to make movies.

Movies can be made by single individuals working alone, by small groups working together for common goals, or by companies.

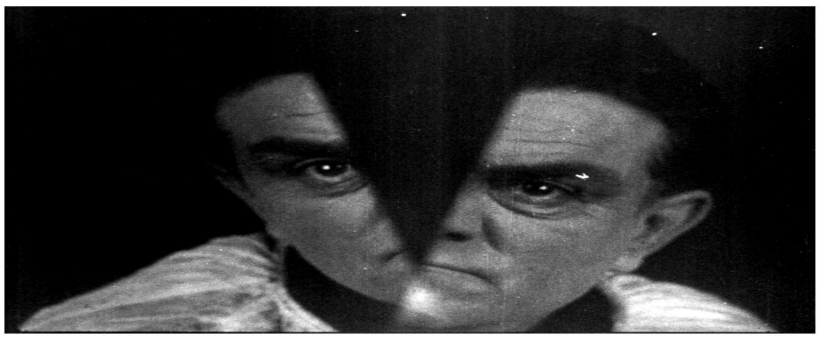
The three primary modes are called:

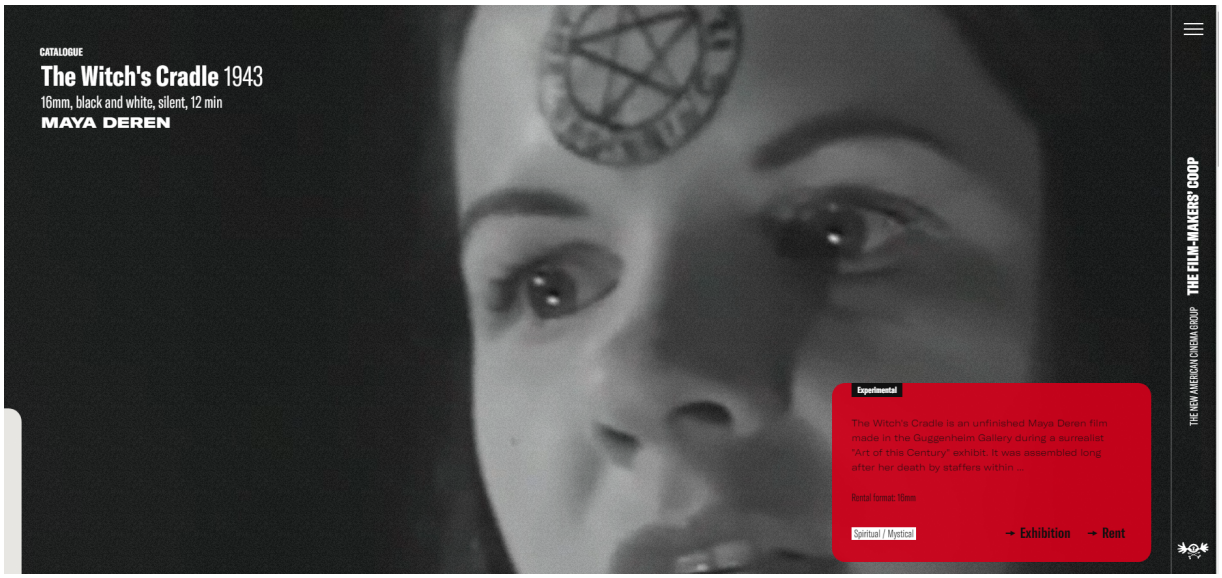
- individual,
- collective, and

- corporate.

For instance:

  - Experimental short films are sometimes made in the individual or collective mode.
    - Filmmaker Maya Deren is a good example of an individual experimental filmmaker.
      - Even individual filmmakers often worked with collectives for resources and distribution.
    - Women filmmakers have been especially important voices in experimental filmmaking.
  - Low-budget feature films are often made in the collective mode.




CATALOGUE
The Witch's Cradle 1943
16mm, black and white, silent, 12 min
MAYA DEREN
Experimental
The Witch's Cradle is an unfinished Maya Deren film made in the Guggenheim Gallery during a surrealist "Art of this Century" exhibit. It was assembled long after her death by staffers within ...
Rental format: 16mm
Spiritual / Mystical
→ Exhibition
→ Rent
THE FILM-MAKERS' COOP
THE NEW AMERICAN CINEMA GROUP

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1.2 Film Reception: Who Receives?

Film Reception: Critics, Scholars, Fans

Movies are 'received' or 'consumed' by the public.

- Different people go to see different movies.
- But there are people who stand in for or represent the general public.
- These are 'professional receivers': people who watch movies for a living and talk or write about them.
    - These are **critics**.

Typically, critics are **professional journalists.**

- Their work is published in newspapers or magazines--and now, increasingly, in online equivalents.
- Sometimes they belong to specialized professional societies specifically for film critics or critics of the arts.
- The critics 'receive' films for the public so the public can decide if the movie ticket is worth buying.
- Some critics started as reporters.
- Some have an academic background.

Scholars or academics are another kind of professional film receiver.

- These are people with advanced degrees who work for colleges and universities.
- They teach about a specific art form: often its history and theory.
- And they publish research, scholarship, and professional opinions on films.
    - These publications tend to be quarterly rather than daily or weekly, like newspapers and magazines.
- Often, their audience is not the general public but rather: other scholars.

A third category of movie 'receivers' are **fans**.

- The internet and social media have allowed virtually anyone to share their opinions on movies (and almost any other topic).
- So instead of professional movie critics judging movies, amateurs can do the same thing:
    - on blogs,
    - in Youtube videos,
    - and on other social media platforms.
- Fan-based criticism blurs the line between amateur and professional, since
    - fans can earn money from social media platforms, and
    - businesses employee fan-critics as a business on a much smaller scale than a national newspaper or magazine.

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1.21 Films Reception: Analysis, Interpretation, Evaluation

When we talk about movies, we can say many kinds of things.

If we watch THE MALTESE FALCON, we can say:

"We often see the characters from a low angle."
"The detective's motives include greed, honor, and lust."
"Clearly the statue of the falcon symbolizes the folly of human greed."

"It's a superior crime film from a low-budget studio."

How do these sentences differ? They are different *activities*.

- The first is a *description*: it's superficial and accurate or inaccurate.
- The second is an *analysis*: it breaks something down into parts or elements.
- The third is an *interpretation*: it says what something *means*.
- The fourth is an *evaluation*: it says if something is good or bad; it gauges quality.
- All are assertions or judgments: they decide 'this is that.'

I look at the statues on Easter Island. I might say:

- "They are big stone statues."
- "The heads are one-third the size of the bodies."

- “They symbolize divine beings.”
- “They are beautiful.”

These are very different sentences.

- The first is a *description.*
- The second is an *analysis*.
- The third is an *interpretation.*
- The fourth is an *evaluation*.

EXAMPLE

Consider the following quote from Edward O'Neill's medium.com essay on Andrei Tarkovsky's 1986 film *Sacrifice*.

> Tarkovsky made seven films. *Sacrifice* was his last. These films are all visually beautiful, slow, and mysterious. Long, quiet, uneventful sequences are punctuated by momentous events — from wars to resurrections. Some of his films are historical, some religious, some science fiction, some a mix. Which is *Sacrifice*?

The sentence highlighted in pink could be merely descriptive or more *evaluative*. "Slow" might be a simple description, but "beautiful" is definitely evaluative: it says something positive about the film.

"Mysterious" might be *interpretive*: it's hard to say. Is it a slam-dunk that there's a mystery there to be seen?

The next two sentences are more analytical, because the author describes the shape or pattern of the films.

In short, some phrases and sentences are more clearly evaluative or interpretive than others.

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1.23 Film Reception: Form & Experience

How do we experience and understand movies?

All these words sound too similar. But we can clarify.

- Movies have a form or shape.
    - *The Wizard of Oz* starts and ends monochrome (one-color): sepia tones.
    - In the middle, it's Technicolor.
    - Or the hurricane is loud and noisy, and afterwards when Dorothy lands in Oz, we hear quiet music (not noise).
- If we went into more detail, we could describe the film's *structure*: how the parts fit together.
- Structure is how a thing has parts which fit together.
- And the form shapes our experience:
    - the way a sudden movement from quiet to loud will cause you to become suddenly alert.

Examples

A **car** is a decent example.

- The *structure* of a car is how the pieces fit together.
- But many parts having the same kind of curve--that's a *pattern*.
- The patterns taken together create a *form*: how we experience the car as a visual thing.

Or consider the example of a **roller coaster**.

- The tracks bring the cars up and down. There is a definite *pattern* of rising and falling, flatter and steeper angles, gentle and sharp curves.
- When we RIDE the roller coaster, the structure and its patterns become an *experience*.
- A long slow build-up to a fast steep descent. A number of sharp curves. A slow rise to another peak. A less-rapid descent, followed by a loop-the-loop, slowing down to a soft stop. That's the *form*.

Another example could be **a poem**.

A Slumber did my Spirit Seal
BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

(published 1800)

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

The poem recounts the death of a loved one.

- It falls into two halves. This is **form**.

    - Each half has the same **structure**: four lines of the same length with alternating rhymes at the end of each line.
- The first half is in the past tense, the second half the present.
    - In the first half, the poet is unaware that there is anything to be afraid of.
    - In the second half, the woman he writes about is dead: she has become inanimate, swung around on the planet like a rock. The word “spirit” in the first half contrasts with words like “rocks and stones” in the second half.
    - The contrast has a strong emotional impact: I was insensitive to the possibility she could die--but now she’s dead.

The form has an impact on us. It's not just the meanings of the words. It's the way the words connect to each other, their sound and meaning, and the overall form.

We could the same thing in prose.

> My mind was asleep. I wasn't afraid. She seemed like she'd never die. But now she's inert, deaf and blind, rolling around on the planet like every other plant and mineral.

But *the impact is completely different*--lacking in emotion.

Form & Experience EXAMPLE

- Form shapes the viewer's experience.
- It can be very hard to describe experience.

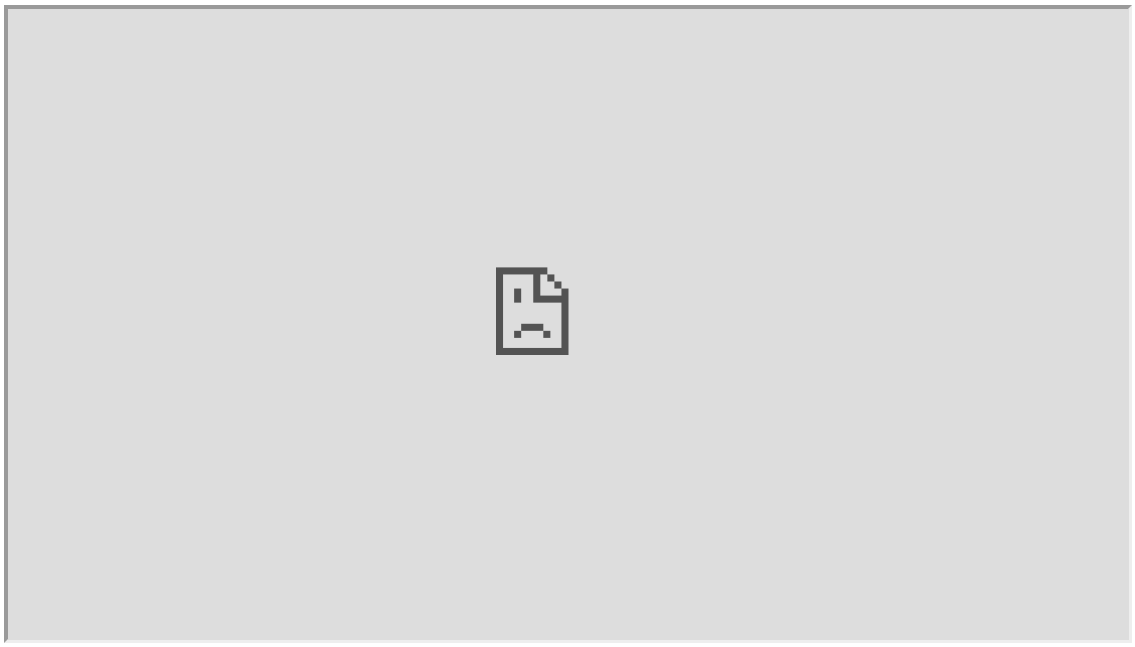
- But if we describe the form, we can see if that helps to explain the experience.

Example

What if you took the shots of a short clip and looked for the structure and patterns? We can do this for the ending of Andrey Tarkovsky's 1986 film *Sacrifice*.

The End of SACRIFICE as an 'Answer'

The last scene of Andrei Tarkovsky's 1986 film THE SACRIFICE is 5 1/2 minutes long and consists of only five shots, ending with a title (text on the screen). What happened before is mysterious, but the last scene does clearly echo earlier elements of the plot. The last scene is an 'answer' to the rest of the film: continuing but changing elements we have seen before. But it also has its own pattern: slowing down and getting darker.



During a writer's birthday party, planes fly overhead to deliver nuclear payloads which will end life on earth. The writer is told that if he sacrifices himself, he can turn back time and undo the forthcoming destruction. He does so: he sleeps with the family maid (who is said to have supernatural powers), burns his house to the ground, stops speaking, and is taken away in an ambulance. The movie's end brings all these elements back together, like tying a knot, a bow on the film that wraps it up like a package.

The last five minutes of the film shifts focus to the man's son, only called "Little Man" in the film, and it ends with the son speaking. Before this, the son has been silent. So the talkative father has fallen mute and the mute son has started to speak: a kind of criss-cross pattern. The movie starts with a talking father and a mute son and ends with the reverse.

The ending then *connects three main strands* of the movie: the father, the son, and the 'witch.'

And it does so in *an overall pattern of slowing down*.

The beginning of the last scene seems disjointed, but quickly it brings three key characters all into the same shot. The last scene begins with about 36 seconds of a long shot of the son going to water a tree he and his father have planted near the film's beginning. A cut to a second long shot of about the same length shows the family maid riding away on a bicycle. We have no idea what the spatial relation between the first and second shots is. As she rides away, she crosses paths with the ambulance that's taking the writer away to be hospitalized. Towards the end of this shot, the son and the tree come into the frame, bringing the three centers of attention briefly together in one shot.

This last scene continues to be disjointed, but it slowly focuses on the son. An abrupt cut reveals the son alone, the ambulance gone, suggesting some missing bit of time. Music starts here: Bach's "Erbarme dicht." The son waters the tree and lies down beside it. This music will continue for four more minutes: until the end of the movie. This shot of the boy is slightly longer than the earlier shots: about 40 seconds. A cut shows a shot of the maid watching from nearby. She gets on the bicycle and rides away. This is the longest shot yet in this sequence: almost a minute.*The shots get longer as the movie ends.*

The last shot is noticeably darker and cooler: as if it's night. The son lies under the tree looking up at it. This will be the longest shot of the scene: almost 2 1/2 minutes. The boy delivers his only line of dialogue in the film: "In the beginning was the word. Why is that, Papa?" Papa is not there to answer. The camera rises up to focus on the tree's seemingly dead branches blowing in the wind, light off the water glinting behind them. A title appears dedicating the film to his own son.

The last shot is visually different than the earlier shots: it's darker. The boy is now alone. He refers to the father, who is not there. And finally human beings are eliminated from the shot (though a human voice remains in the music).

A movie about the destruction of all human life on the planet ends with a shot with no human beings visible in it.

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1.22 Film Reception: Form & Function

So a movie has a shape or form.

- And you experience that a certain way.
- But that is quite subjective.

Another way to analyze movies is to ask what different parts of a movie DO.

- I.e., what is their **function**?
- This could be asked of: a character, a prop, a color, etc.
- These functions have some fancy names--but the ideas are straightforward.

function	**technical name** **why it's called that**	**general or typical example**
to create a pattern that makes the work cohere	**formal** or **syntactic** it's purely a pattern or works like grammar in a sentence	Credits at the beginning and end of a movie tell you "it's started" and "it's over."
to carry meaning--any meaning whatever	**semantic**	Even if you just saw blurry colors on the screen, you might think "oh

	the way words have meanings in a sentence	blue--that's calm...oh red--that's angry."
to name some particular person, place, or thing	**denotative** "Abraham Lincoln" and "the 16th President of the United States" refer to the same thing. "Hamlet" is a Danish prince, even if he's fictional	When a movie is set in Los Angeles or New York City, they not only print it on the screen, they show something distinctive--like Hollywood Boulevard or Times Square.
to suggest a meaning that is more abstract--e.g., sadness, obedience	**connotative** If I send you a dozen roses but no card, that "connotes" romantic love.	You could say: a movie might denote a cowboy but it would connote a villain.
to convey a whole set of related meanings--e.g. religious meanings	**allegorical** Sometimes when Jesus says things to his followers, the meaning is not direct; it's indirect	A movie about a small town might make points about politics by letting the small town government stand in for our federal government.
to tell a story	**narrative** A narrative is a series of events that unfold in time	A man buys an engagement ring and then meets a woman for dinner. We are pretty sure

	and space.	to read this as a narrative--and to expect a proposal.
to persuade	**rhetorical** or **persuasive** A story may also persuade--e.g., 'might does not make right' or 'money can't buy happiness.'	The villain in a movie might work for a disreputable kind of company--to make a point about that industry.
to bring the spectators inside the mental state (for instance) of a character	**psychological** Audiovisual elements may convey the character's state of mind as much as acting or make-up.	When the character is nervous and we hear 'tense' music.

- Some famous movies have props or words whose functions we can easily list--although not every object in every movie performs every function.

Form & Function: EXAMPLE

Any piece or part of a film can serve many purposes: they perform many functions.

Compare this to a window in a house.

- It keeps the cold out IN the winter.
- It keeps the cold IN in the summer.

- It lets light in.
- It lets us see out.

A window in a house performs many functions.

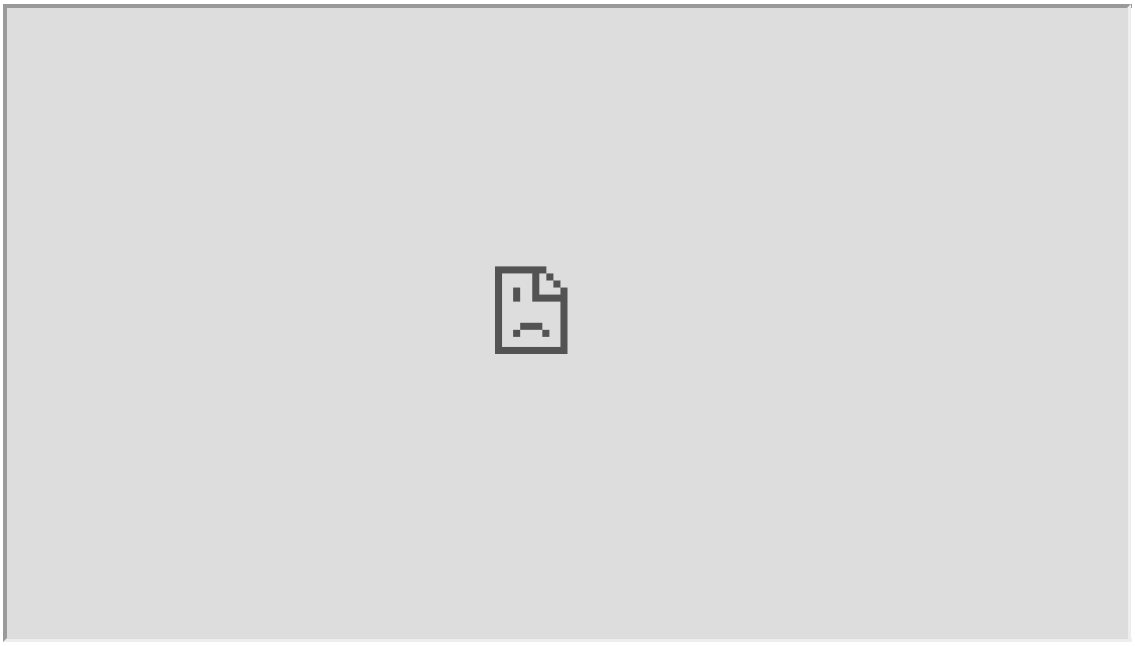
Likewise for any piece or part of a film: a shot, a scene, a color, an edit.

If you go read about word "Rosebud" in Orson Welles' 1941 movie Citizen Kane, you will find that the word "Rosebud" performs many functions.

- It holds the movie together.
- It conveys meaning.
- It turns out to refer to a specific fictional thing.
- It suggests a more general meaning.
- It serves as a symbol for another level of meaning that is not literal.
- It serves as part of an argument. 'You can't buy happiness.'
- It helps tell the story.
- It carries feelings.
- It says something about a character's psychological state.

We can give these functions names, although the important thing is being able to find how particular sights, sounds, or techniques do these things in particular movies.

(Before proceeding, look at how your textbook discusses CITIZEN KANE and watch this brief summary.)



SUMMARY: A wealthy man's dying word "Rosebud" triggers a journalist to investigate his life. The journalist interviews the man's banker, a journalist he worked with, his "best friend," and his second wife. The journalist finds some anecdotes pertaining to "Rosebud," but nothing definitive.

function name	what it does	how it works with "Rosebud"
formal (syntactic)	holds the work together	The wealthy man's life gives the story unity, but so does the quest for the meaning of "Rosebud."
semantic	carries meaning	We don't know what meaning "Rosebud" carries--which is pretty clever.
denotative	points to a specific thing	Ultimately, we do find out what "Rosebud" denotes: what it literally means.
connotative	suggests a more	People have different

	general meaning	interpretations of the connotation of Rosebud--e.g., that it suggests the lost pleasures of simple childhood days before the corrupting influence of money.
allegorical	has a secondary meaning	At a simple level, the wealth man's life was often unhappy, and so "Rosebud" might be taken to say 'money can't buy happiness.'
rhetorical	makes an argument	"Rosebud" can be seen as bringing together "money can't buy happiness" as an argument.
narrative	tells a story	Each time the word "Rosebud" is said combined together to tell a story.
emotional/affective	expresses emotion	"Rosebud" seems to carry deep emotions, although we don't know quite what they are .
psychological	takes us into someone's mind	"Rosebud" might give us insight into the wealthy man's mind--or it might not.

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1.1 to 1.23 OVERVIEW Production & Reception

Film Production & Reception

The counterpart to film production is "**reception**" or "consumption."

- Audiences 'receive' movies.
- But before they do, **critics** act as representatives of the public.
    - Critics 'pre-screen' movies for the general public.
    - They discuss and debate films publicly.
    - Audiences do this, too, but discussions happening in living rooms and coffee shops are harder to track.

The critical process is not homogeneous.

- Critics (and audiences) can **describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate**. They
    - say what they see,
    - pull the film into pieces,
    - find meanings, and
    - say which films are better and which worse.

We **experience** movies.

- But this experience is driven by something.
    - The **form** shapes our experience of the film--like the shape of a roller coast shapes our experience riding it.

- We often think of films (like novels and paintings and poems and other works of art) as having a **meaning** or meanings.
    - But works of art are also experiences, and experience doesn't always simplify itself into a meaning.

Works of art have a **form** or pattern.

- The pattern can affect the participants' **experience**.
    - This is the film's form, its elements and patterns: for instance,
        - a long slow build-up,
        - or fast loud scenes alternated with slow, quiet ones.

We can also see every element of a movie as having one or more **functions**.

- A hat might come to *represent the character* who wears it.
- But the style might also make us think of the character as *heroic or villainous*.

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1.3 Each Movie Is Unique--But....

In a sense, every movie is **unique**.

- But movies are not 100% unique.
- Movies have a lot in common.

If a movie were 100% unique, you might not understand it at all.

- And if a movie were exactly like another, that would pose legal problems.
- So movies must be different--but not TOO different.

At one end, we should be able to say *how each movie is different from others*.

- But at the other end, we must identify broad things movies have in common. There are two broad ways to do this.
  - Movies differ from each other and resemble one another in terms of **style**: not **what** they do, say, or show, but **how** they do this doing, saying, or showing.
  - Movies also resemble each other by sharing **conventions**: common patterns or rules.
    - Other conventions make these movies resemble one another and set them apart from those others.

        - Movies where the characters sing and dance fall into one category, and movies about gangsters typically fall into a separate category.
    - Conventions make movies comprehensible--and also pleasurable.
- The broadest style uniting movies around the world is *realism*.
- The local conventions which separate musicals from gangster films make up what we call *genres*.

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1.31 Films Have Norms and Exceptions.

When analyzing a film, you cannot know in advance: 'look for this, that, and the other.'

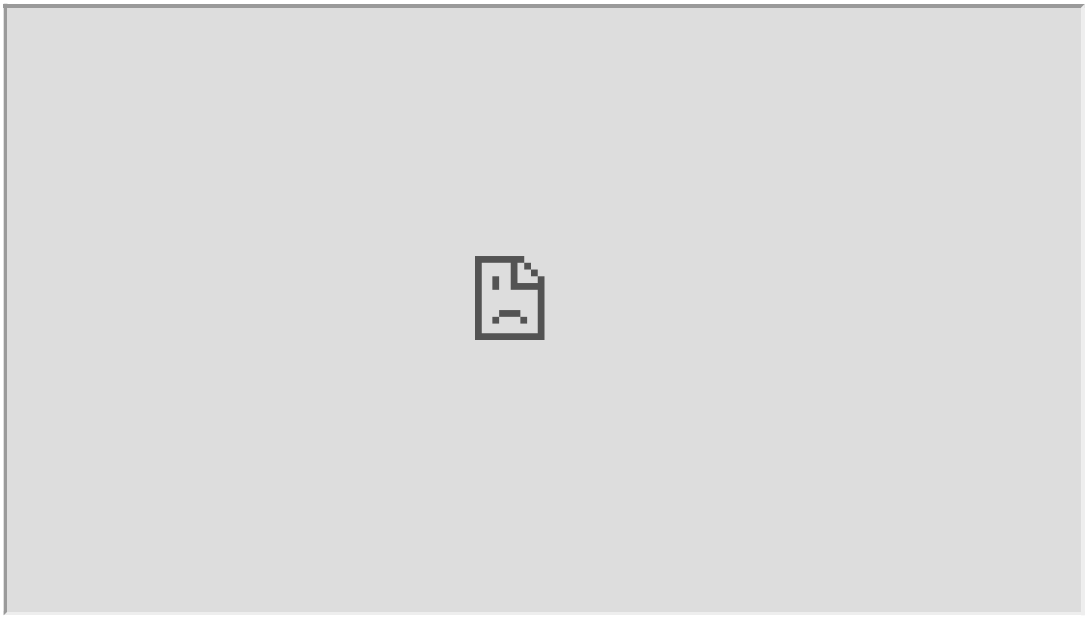
Because all films are different.

There is likely no perfectly average, normal, typical film.

Each film uses a range of choices: light and dark, bright and muted colors, loud and quiet sounds, etc.

- Films from the same country in the same decade will have certain average, typical practices.
- Then a certain genre of films in that period will have another set of norms: maybe horror films use more of the color red and more darkness.
- Then a single film will also have more common and uncommon choices and a narrower or greater range:
    - *Citizen Kaneuses many extremes of light and dark, high and low angles, many ways of using sound.*
    - *Ozu'sLate Summeruses a much more narrow range of choices.*

Even in a single scene, Citizen Kane uses extremes of high and low, near and far.

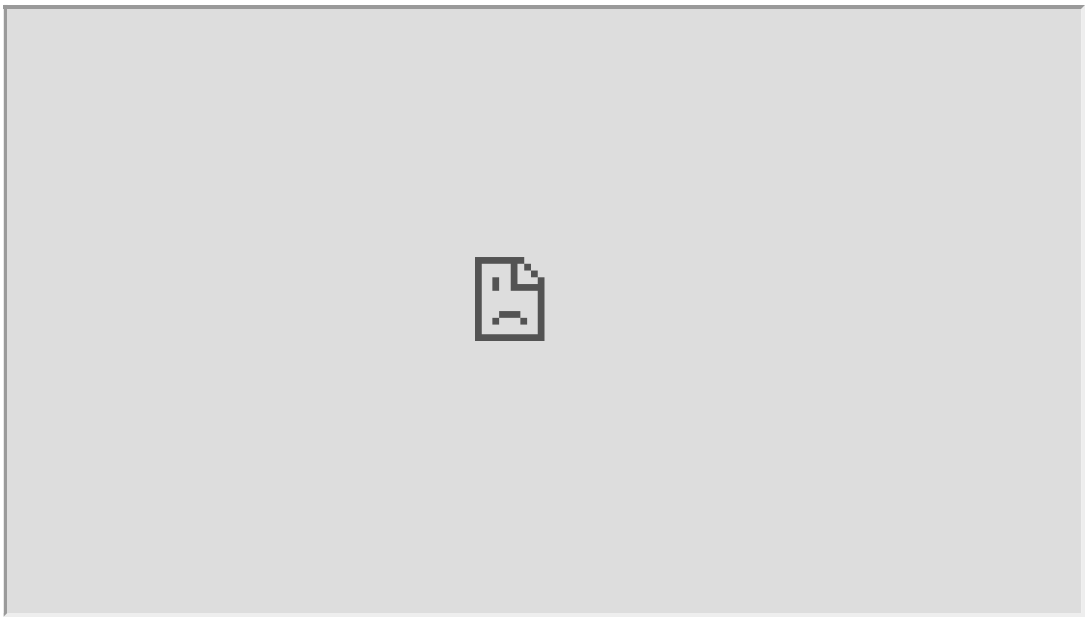


By contrast, the Japanese director Ozu uses a very limited range of choices in his films--and

they are different than the American way of staging scenes: the characters sit on the floor, so the camera is lower.

Or there's another example you might know better.

- If memory serves, the movie SEVEN (or SE7EN) is very dimly lit. A lot of scenes take place indoors.
- It rains a lot, and it's very hard to hear the characters' dialogue over the rain and other background noises.
- The film is MOSTLY dark and rainy, and the dialogue mostly quiet, and the scenes largely indoors.
- Those are norms for that film.
- So when there is a scene that's sunny and bright and has the characters screaming loudly, we notice it. It stands out. The principle of CONTRAST draws our attention to it.
- And doesn't the last scene take place outdoors, in bright sun, with the characters yelling?



Notice how dark this sequence is. Our ability to see is limited. This comes to a head when Brad Pitt's character is knocked out and his gun falls into the hands of the man he's chasing. Even when we see the gun and the man being chased, we can't quite see that man!

So when you are analyzing a film, it's helpful to think about

- What's typical or the norm for this film? For this kind of film--this genre?
  - E.g., people break into song in musicals or murder each other in crime films.
  - But people seldom murder each other in, say, a romantic comedy, or break into song in a crime film.
- Within the film, what's more typical and more atypical? What happens a lot and what happens not much?
- What are the range of choices? The extremes?

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1.32 What Is Style?

Styles

All the choices a movie makes create a **style**.

- A style is *a way of doing things*.
    - Films have styles.
    - So do *writing*, *clothes*, and even *cultures*.

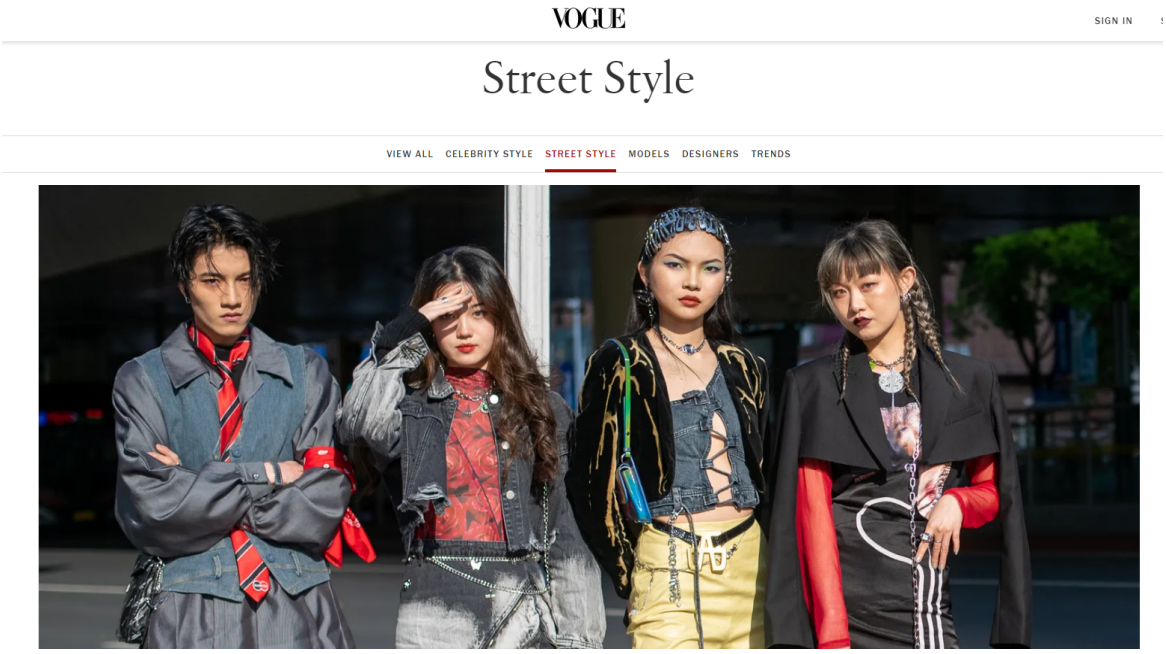
- And styles can be **shared or unique**.
    - There is an American style of cooking.
    - And there is YOUR way of cooking.

Do you write "this, that [no comma] and the other"? Or "this, that, and the other" (with a comma)?

- That's a matter of writing style.

In clothing, style can mean: what to wear, what not to wear, what's new and hip to wear.

The New Yorker magazine on clothing style rules NOT to break.

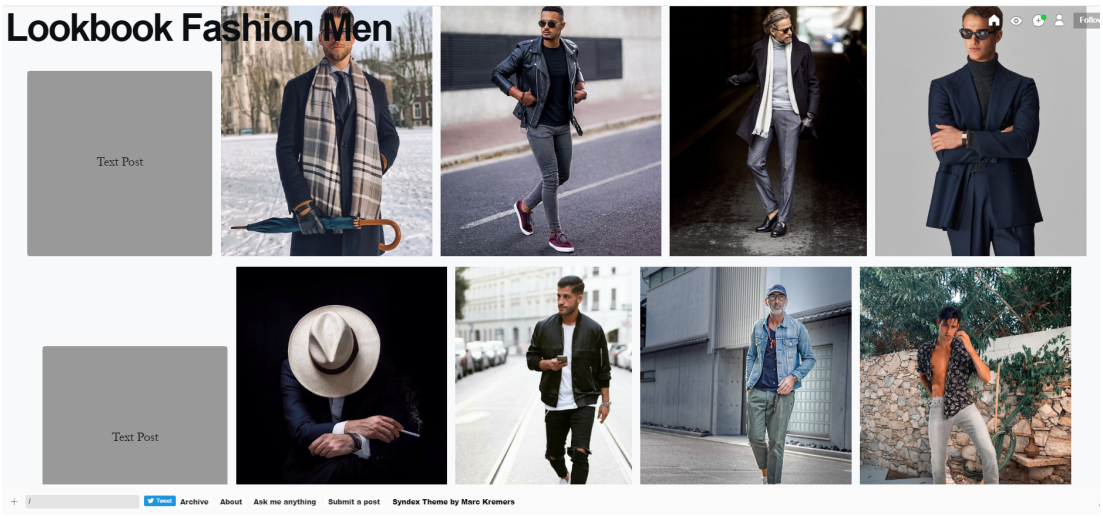


[Vogue magazine has a whole section dedicated to 'street' styles: what people actually wear.]

Is this what you should wear?

What you should not wear?

Or just the unique style of these individuals?



[A tumblr site for men's fashion.]

Note that style can mean:

what people SHOULD do

or

what people ACTUALLY do.

Or:

do's and don't's

vs.

options.

Cultures have styles, including corporate cultures.

SOURCE SPENCER STUART
FROM "THE LEADER'S GUIDE TO CORPORATE CULTURE," BY BORIS GROYSBERG, JEREMIAH LEE, JESSE PRICE, AND J. YO-JUD CHENG, JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2018

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[Harvard Business Review helps corporate leaders understand cultural styles--for companies and even countries.]

And of course movies have styles.

EXPLORATION QUESTION

Does your film textbook talk about style?

How does your textbook define style?

What's its best example of style?

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1.33 Style: Not Quite Ordinary

Style: More or Less?

Every film has a style.

- There is no film with "no style."
- Some films just have a more conventional style.

In *The Master* when Freddie (Joaquin Phoenix) meets The Master (the late Philip Seymour Hoffman), the scene is largely unremarkable, ordinary.

But we barely see Hoffman.

Instead we see a red blur of the robe on his shoulder.

- Normally, we'd see a shoulder or nothing.

So the style of the film is ordinary--but not quite.

- The scene does **not** have less or more style: it has a slightly different style.

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1.4 A Dominant Mainstream Film Style: Realism.

- One broad type of style dominates mainstream movies around the world.
    - We can call it "realism," but doing so, we are assuming some things about reality.
        - A "common sense" version of reality includes the ideas that
            - reality is **consistent**, and
            - reality is **knowable**.
        - For example...
            - A package arrives in your mail.
                - It's a box.
                - The return address is unfamiliar.
            - You probably believe:
                - that whatever is inside the box, you can discover what that is--e.g., by opening the box; and
                - that what is in the box will not change:
                    - whatever is in the box now will be in the box an hour from now.
        - You believe reality is consistent and knowable.

Four Aspects of Mainstream Film Style

- We can describe the a mainstream style of realism along four dimensions.

    - Mainstream conventional films are:
        - more **transparent** than opaque,
        - more **closed** than open,
        - more **definite** than vague or ambiguous, and
        - more **normative** than socially critical.
- What do these mean?
    - A film is **transparent** when the audience can see and know what they need to know to be entertained.
        - Some facts may be hidden but it's to make the film more enjoyable, not simply confusing.
    - A film is **closed** when all the pieces fit together.
        - There's nothing disconnected from everything else.
        - Everything in it is connected to the rest.
        - The ending 'ties up' most of the 'loose ends.'
    - A film is **definite** when we can know what's happening.
        - It's not completely ambiguous.
            - *Imagine a murder mystery where you can't tell what the crime is.*
            - That would be very ambiguous.
    - A film is **normative** when it accepts and endorses current social norms.
        - A s**ocially critica**l film suggests that the social order we live in is unfair, unjust, or does not support individual or collective happiness.

When Watching a Movie, You Can Ask Yourself...

- Is the movie's style more conventional or unconventional?
- Does the audience see everything they need to see?

- Does the ending entirely resolve the characters' problems?
- Is the world of the film clear and definite? Or unclear and ambiguous?
    - As regards what's happening?
    - As regards right and wrong, good and bad?
    - Morally ambiguous?
- Does the film embrace the idea that society is basically good, fair, and just?
    - Or does the film criticize society as essentially contrary to human happiness?
    - Is it 'normative'? Or 'critical'?
    - How and why?

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1.41 More or Less Realist: How Much Ambiguity?

An Example: How Much Ambiguity Is in These Two Scenes?

Consider the following two scenes from two celebrated films: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941) and *The Master* (Paul Thomas Anderson, 2012). Both films tell a story about complicated friendships with a difficult but very important person who may or may not be a charlatan.

This scene can be described several ways.

A politician tries to blackmail his rival over the rival's mistress.
A strong but flawed man won't let himself be taken down by cheap political

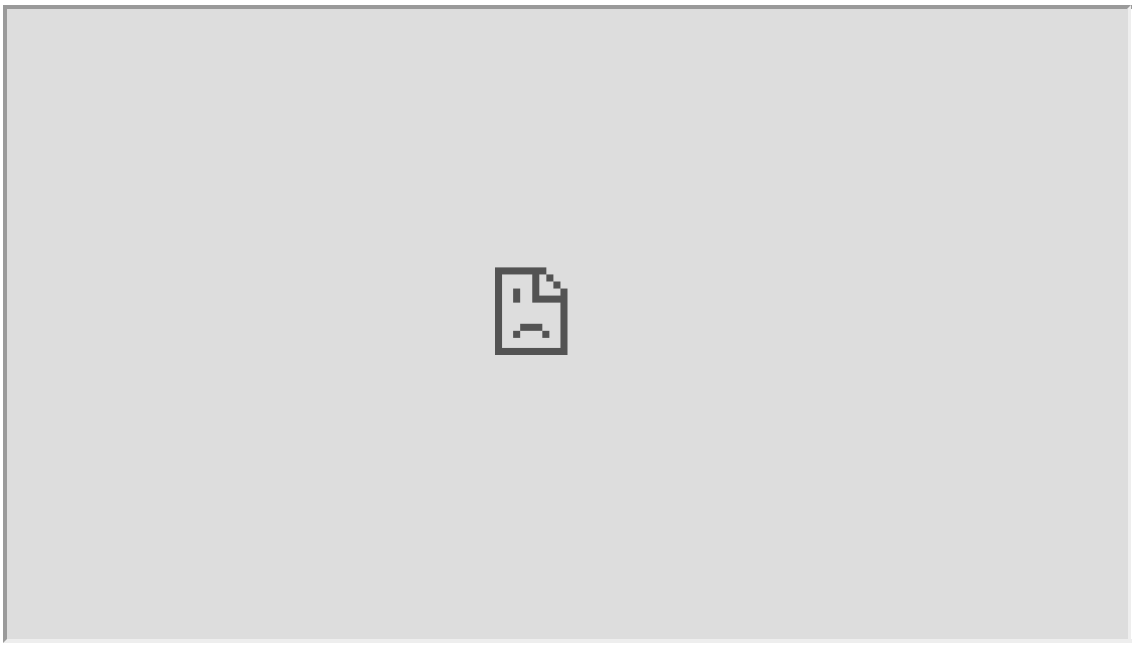
shenanigans.
A powerful man is brought down by his own flaws.

This scene is **clearly ambiguous**.

The ambiguity is baked in: it's not an accident. But it's limited.

We can see things both ways.

Now consider this scene from a more recent film (set in the years after World War II).



This scene is a bit more ambiguous. It could be described several ways.

A visionary is interrupted and attacked by a skeptic.
A madman is driven into a rage by common sense.
A charlatan must dispose of a danger to his fraudulent scheme.

This scene is **strongly ambiguous**.

The man explaining past lives may be a fraud, insane, or a visionary.

But these things are incompatible. He must be one or another.

We can't see things two ways at once. One view must be right--but we're not given the information to decide.

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1.5 Clusters of Conventions or 'Kinds' of Films: Genres

There are broad conventions which films share: like realism as a style.

Some clusters of conventions are called **genres**.

Genre is just a fancy word for "kind" or category.

- Genres of novel include romance, historical fiction, detective fiction, horror, etc.
- Genres of music include classical, folk, rock and roll, country, rap, hip-hop, etc.
- Genres of film include: westerns, musicals, horror films, action movies, thrillers, etc.

When talking about film, a genre is a kind or type of film: thus not one film but many. We say

- *Brokeback Mountain* is an unusual western.
- *Strictly Ballroom* is a musical without singing (sometimes called a "dansical").
- *Wind River* is a western with snow.
- Etc.

Genres consist of sets of conventions. These are *things the audience expects to happen.*

Genre conventions go beyond style. Genres share and are separated by iconography and narrative conventions, and these are strongly structured by oppositions (not just differences).

- *Iconography* is a set of visual **symbols** with pre-determined meanings.
- *Narrative* conventions are **story** elements that repeat in a definite order.
- *Oppositions* are pairs of terms which are negative images of each other and which can organize clear meanings and values for an audience.
    - They're not just different: they're opposite.

So:

- In the western,
    - the 'bad guys' may wear black hats, drink, and gamble. Those are visual symbols or a part of the iconography of the genre.
    - The narrative conventions of the western include a lawless region in the American west being made safe to raise families.
    - The underlying oppositions which organize the iconography and the narrative are: good vs. bad, wild vs. tamed, savage vs. civilized, crime vs. law, disorder vs. order, and similar.
- In the musical,
    - the key audiovisual convention involves the characters suddenly breaking into song and dance while at the laundromat or walking down the street--something not realistic but which allows the genre to exist.
    - The narrative usually involves a young man wooing a young-- through song and dance.
    - The oppositions are usually spontaneous vs. rehearsed, popular vs. elite, etc. (You can see why *Footloose* is a musical.)

There is also a *ritual* interpretation of genres: the movies are like 'magical thinking' which uses socially-approved symbols and gestures to make something happen.

- The marriage ceremony is a ritual which takes a man and woman (for instance) and makes them into a husband and a wife through special words, clothes, music, and rings.
- The graduation ceremony makes a busy college student into an under-employed graduate through special words, pieces of paper, music, robes, and funny hats.
- Likewise, the western rids the west of crime and proves a man's strength through contests of shooting skill, the musical allows a young man and woman to become a couple through song and dance, the horror films exorcises evil from society so we can be sure that society itself is not an evil.

Along similar lines, genres also have an ideological function:

- The western tells us that violence is necessary for social order, and it's okay as long as the violence is done by good people for the right reasons.
- The musical assures us that men and women belong together, as long as they go through the right motions--as opposed to the idea that people don't need to be defined as one half of a couple, and they don't need anyone's permission or blessing to be intimate.
- The horror film assures us that evil is external to society and can be eliminated--rather than evil being a part of every human being and every social system.

And genres can also be seen as embodying **ideology**: ideas people must be made to believe in order to maintain society in a particular form.

- E.g., if you're to continue working for a wage that doesn't pay you enough to support your family, you must believe that family is worth sacrificing for. This can be perfectly true, but believing it so you'll accept less pay than you need or deserve--that's a different thing.

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1.51 Comparing Genres (and the Fairy Tale)

Comparing genres to each other (and to fairy tales) may give you a feeling for how genres can be seen from different perspectives.

genre	fairy tales	western	musical	gangster	detective	
symbols stories: general character types, settings, and events.	A child, parental figures, creatures with magical powers like ogres, witches, etc. A child does something forbidden and as a result must flee, engage in a contest, etc., to overcome a monster and achieve a new status.	Hero expels 'bad guys' (criminals, Native Americans) to make the west safe for white families.	Boy meets girl. Boy and girl sing dance. Boy and girl become couple.	Charismatic violent man rises to the top--then falls.	Private detective takes on case. Nothing is what it seems. A woman manipulates him. He solves the case puts the woman in her place (e.g., jail).	S a n d n
oppositions: these structure human thought	forbidden vs. permitted danger vs. safety poor vs. rich	nature vs. society wild vs. tame whites vs. 'others'	male vs. female success vs. failure single vs. married	success vs. failure society vs. violence	male vs. female rich vs. middle-class	nc al g re

	peasant vs. royalty	lawful vs. lawless	proper vs. improper			sc r r
myth: explanation of the origins of fundamental things like society, gender….	People achieve high social status by first violating social rules and then overcoming a powerful danger.	‘Good’ violence was needed to establish non-violent law order.	Professional and personal success are the same thing.	‘Crime doesn’t pay’--but it does for a little while.	Everyone has larceny in his or her heart, and crime makes strange bedfellows.	S ar te b g r
ritual: a procedure people enact again and again which has a symbolic meaning and psychological benefit	Trial: facing an opponent in a situation of danger and risk.	Scapegoating: a society purifies itself by projecting their ills onto a victim whom they destroy.	Courtship: to become a couple requires a period of exploration and negotiation.	Scapegoating again.	The trickster outwits his opponents or uses their own tactics against them. (This is more a myth than a ritual.)	E ex c
ideology: beliefs that keep society organized	Obey the rules--unless you’re ‘elect’ and foreordained to rise in social status.	Law is nonviolent today (but it was so in the past).	Professional and personal happiness can go hand-in-hand--just not for you.	Financial success based on violence cannot survive for long. Unlawful power based on strength can’t last--that’s not how we live (wink wink).	‘It takes a thief to catch a thief.’	Re

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Questionnaire 1.08 to 1.14 Reception: Conventions & Style

In earlier questionnaires, you did some research on a film you're studying.

- You found some basic facts about it.
- You found another film to compare it to.
- And you found some critical discussions.
    - (In some cases, these were supplied for you.)

You also have a textbook you've chosen to use for this course. (These are mentioned in the FAQ's.)

1. Uniqueness.

- How is the movie you're analyzing different from other movies you've seen?
    - E.g., *Star Wars* is a sci-fi film, but other sci fi films make aliens into monsters, and few sci-fi films have princesses.
- How the same?
    - Rescuing the princess may seem to you like *Princess Bride*. The space ships and weapons in *Star Wars* are not so different from those in *Star Trek*.

2. Style Genre

- Does your film textbook talk about style?
- How does your textbook define style?
- What's its best example of style?
- What does your film textbook say about film genre?

3. Out-of-the-Ordinary.

- Is there a moment in the film you're studying where the style stands out to you?
    - As old-fashioned? Or striking? Or cool?
    - Why do you think you react to the style this way.

4. Dominant Mainstream Style (Realism).

- Is the movie's style more conventional or unconventional?
    - Does the audience see everything they need to see?
    - Does the ending entirely resolve the characters' problems?
    - Is the world of the film clear and definite? Or unclear and ambiguous?
        - As regards what's happening?
        - As regards right and wrong, good and bad?
        - Morally ambiguous?

    - Does the film embrace the idea that society is basically good, fair, and just?
        - Or does the film criticize society as essentially contrary to human happiness?
        - Is it 'normative'? Or 'critical'? How and why?

    - How does the moment where the style stands out fit into this dominant realist style?

5. Genre.

- Does the film you're studying fit into a genre?
- What is that genre?
    - If a documentary, are there different styles of documentary?
- Do critics mention it in their reviews, discussions, articles?
    - Find a definition of that genre that discusses at least two of the dimensions of genre:
        - symbols and stories,
        - oppositions,
        - myth,
        - ritual,
        - ideology.

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2.0 Films Are Linear

Films unfold one moment after the next.

- One frame at a time is fed through the projector or is flashed on a screen.
    - Just like words are made up of one letter at a time and
    - sentences are made up of one word at a time.
        - There is no word with two letters said at once.
        - There is no sentence with two words spoken simultaneously.

A film is a line.

But not an unbroken line.

- Films fall into pieces, segments, chunks.
    - You can give them technical names or not--it depends on your purpose.
- And those pieces fall apart or hold together in various ways.
    - As moments in a **drama**.
    - As pages in a **script**or **screenplay**.
    - As moments in a **story**.
    - As elements of an **argument** or a **poem**.

You can spend a lot of time just understanding how a movie tells its story or makes its argument or has its impact: one moment at a time, one chunk at a time.

- Even boxers seldom throw two punches at exactly the same time.

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2.1 Segmentation

How many 'pieces' does a movie have?

- A two-hour film is a two-hour chunk of film.
- Or two one-hour chunks of film.
- Or 120 one-minute chunks of film.
- Etc.

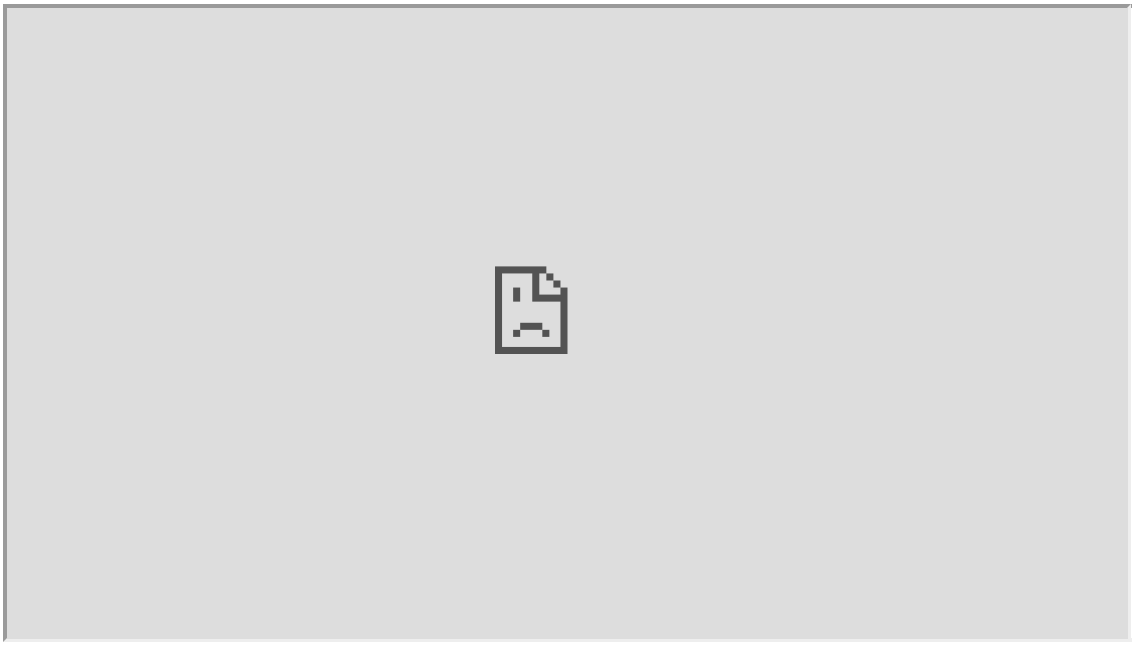
There's no single right answer.

Segmentation Simply Means: Breaking a Movie Down into Sequential Pieces.

Here it's useful to distinguish between **a scene and sequence**.

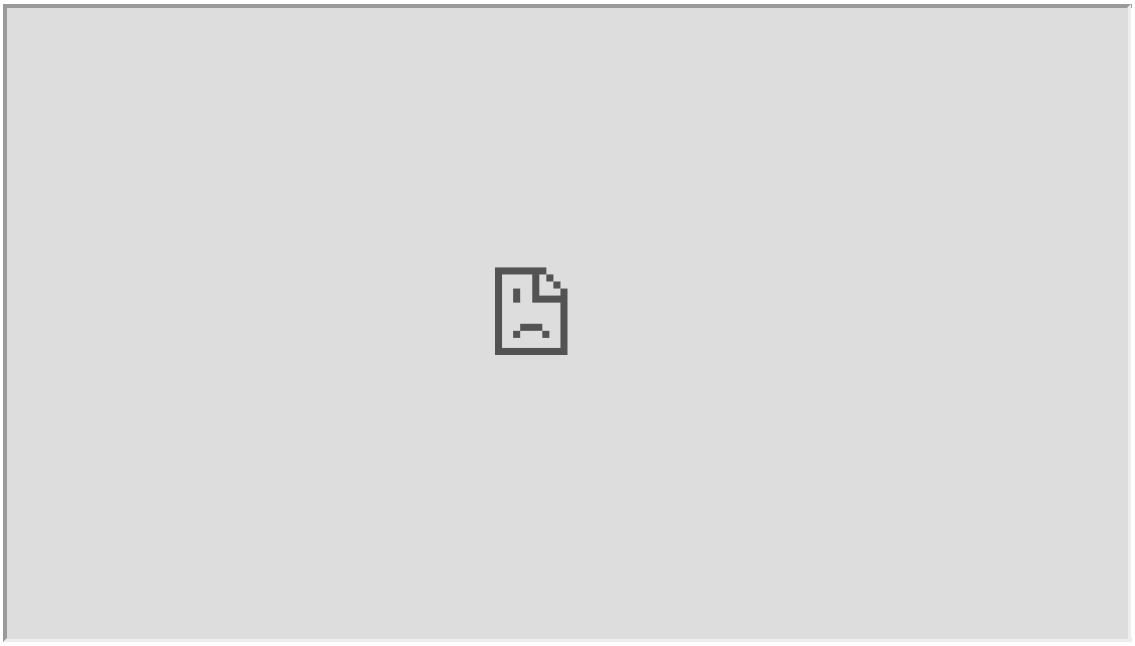
- A **scene** is any continuous segment of a film which is united by space and time.
- A **sequence** is any continuous segment of film--any number of shots, from one to a thousand (or more)--which 'hangs together' in some way, has some unity.

The breakfast table 'scene' from *Citizen Kane* looks like a scene--a couple having breakfast--but in fact it's a sequence: many breakfast condensed.



The Exception Proves the Rule.

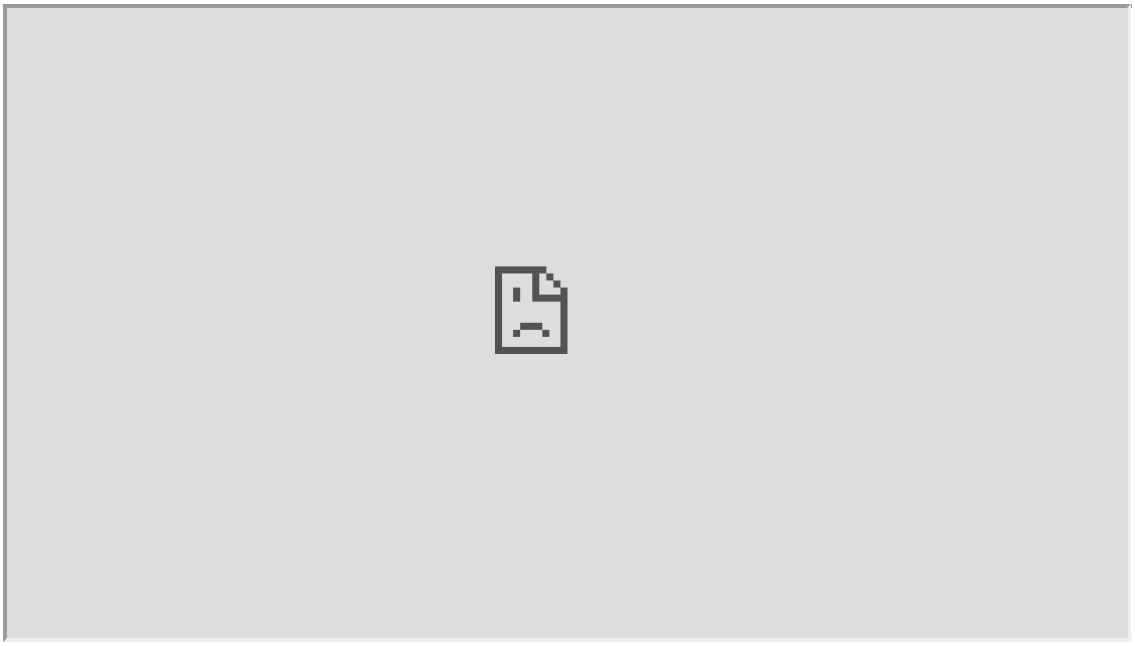
Film nerds love long takes in movies: the camera records without stopping--sometimes for a whole scene.



In theory, a feature film could consist of just a single shot with no editing.

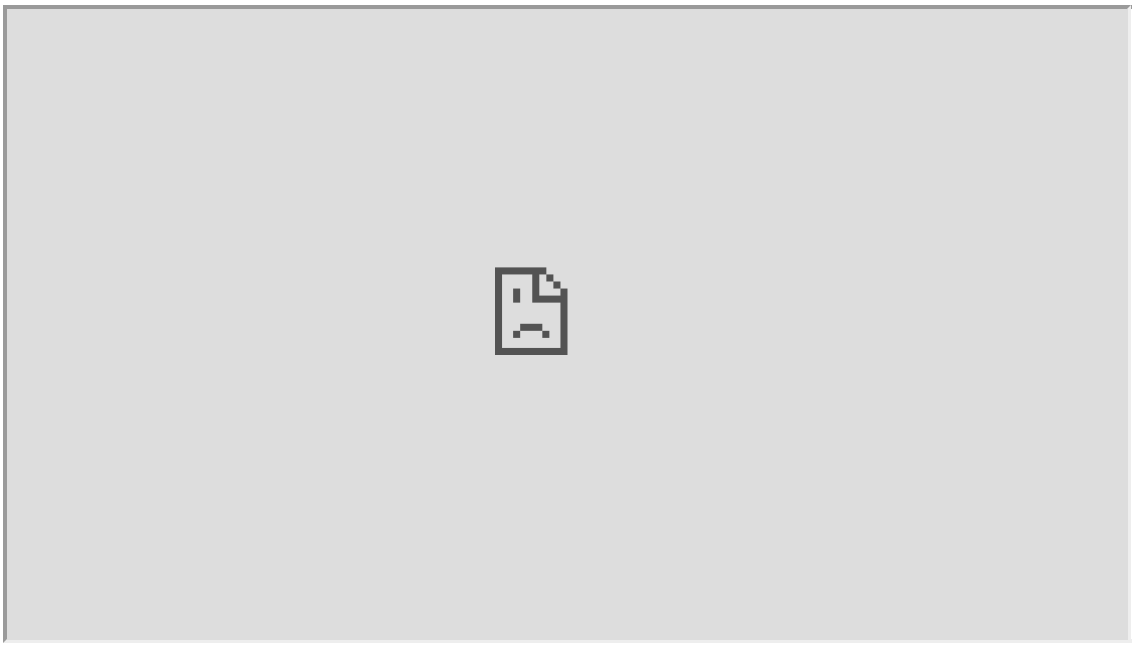
- To be thorough, we could talk here about what a "shot" is.
    - A shot is an uninterrupted piece of film.
        - The camera has started running, and it does not stop.
        - Once it stops, or once the resulting piece of film is snipped, that's the end of a shot.
- But we'd like to put off talking about what a shot is.
    - So for right now, we can say "these are films where the camera never stops running."

There is such a film: *Russian Ark* (2002, dir. Sokurov).



But even *Russian Ark* falls into distinct parts as the camera goes through different rooms and travels through time.

Timecode is four continuous, unbroken shots that run side by side.



Some films pretend to be a single long take: *Rope*, *Running Time*, *Birdman*.

- Here you could say: there's NO segmentation.
- Or the segmentation would have to divide into chunks that were not shots (since there's 'only one' shot).

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2.11 Segmentation - What Kinds of Chunks

We're fine with sequences and scenes.

But it's good to see how people organize these things.

- French film analyst Christian Metz had a very logical idea.*
    - You either have a single shot that stands alone ("**autonomous** shot"), or you have shots hanging together.
    - Then some segments ("syntagmas") are NOT chronological,
    - and some ARE **chronological**, but loosely:
        - a bunch of shots of a farm aren't really in a specific order--
            - they just kind of say 'here's a farm.'
    - Then you have sequences that cut back-and-forth ("**alternating**") and those that don't.
        - Among those that don't:
            - a **scene** leaves nothing out,
            - **episodic segments** clearly leave stuff out, and
            - **'ordinary' segments** leave stuff out, but not so clearly.

*Metz started from the shot and went outwards--whereas it's probably easier to start with the whole film and then go 'inwards' to subdivisions.

Once again, we're avoiding defining the term "shot" for now.

- We'd rather talk about "shots" when there are more than one of them: that's editing.

- So for right now, we're talking about the segmentation of the story, rather than the film.
    - What happens, what we see, is broken into chunks of time and space.
        - They may use one or more pieces of film ("shots"), but for now we're just going to see story as falling into pieces, rather than the film being made up of "shots."

Most Films Fall Into Clear Chunks

This could be three or four or a dozen.

- *The Exorcist* (1973) starts with the exorcist at an archeological dig.
- Then we meet a mother and daughter, and we watch the daughter become possessed by a demon.
- The exorcist shows up. This might be a new chunk or a part of the 'possession' chunk.
- The demon is exorcised, and the last few minutes of the movie take place some weeks later.

So this is kind of three chunks: beginning, middle, and end.

Or four: exorcist abroad, possession, exorcist in the U.S., after the exorcism.

And truly, the film could be broken down into 20 or so scenes.

Each segmentation reveals something different about the film.

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2.2 Film as Drama

Drama is the art of telling a story through *actions* and *conflict*.

Typically, someone tries to do something, finds it's not easy, and eventually succeeds or fails.

Consider this story:

> When a naive young farmhand loses his aunt and uncle, he joins with a roguish pilot and a wise old man on a quest to rescue a captured princess and stop a gigantic death-dealing satellite to achieve glory--or die trying.

The dramatic terms are as follows:

- A *protagonist* finds a *goal* and takes *actions* to achieve it.
- The protagonist encounters *obstacles*, often including an *antagonist*: a person who actively stands in the way.
    - The opposition between the protagonist and the antagonist or the protagonist and various obstacles makes for *conflict* which is believed to be interesting to the audience.
- The protagonist may find *helpers* along the way. (I haven't forgotten the pilot's tall furry friend!)
- The protagonist has something at *stake*: something she can win and something she may lose.
- By the end of the story, the situation is *resolved* decisively.

protagonist	Luke

goal	overcome the Empire
actions	learning The Force, rescuing the Princess, destroying the Death Star
obstacles	The Empire
antagonist	Darth Vader
helpers	Han Solo, Obi Wan, Chewie
stakes	life or death, the end of the rebellion
resolution	medals for everyone except the furry one

Any time we are talking about a protagonist taking actions towards a goal, we are talking about the dramatic aspects of a work.

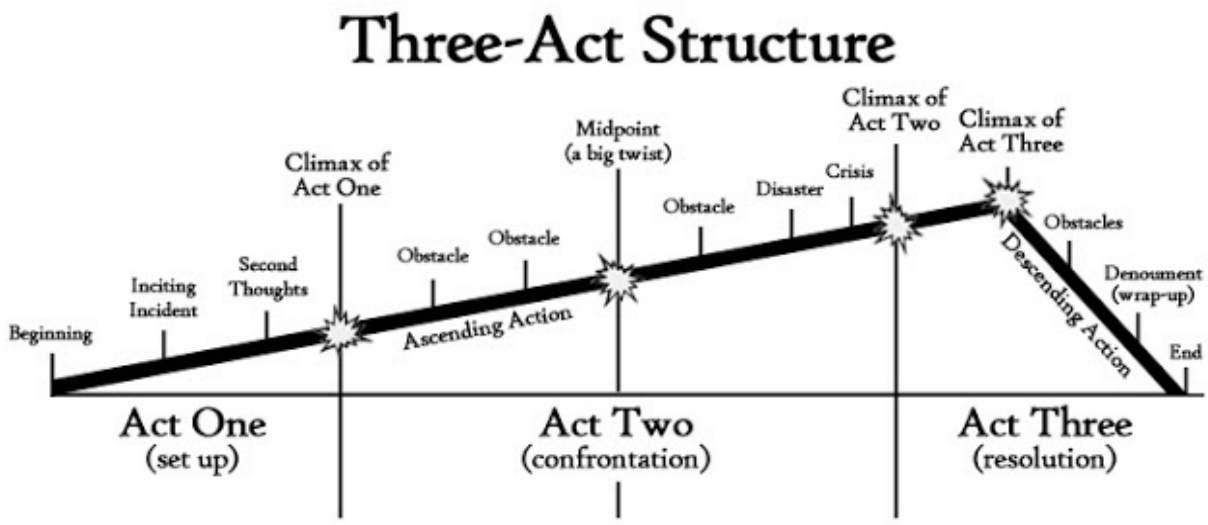
> More specific theories of drama come from Aristotle's Poeticsand the 19th-century German writer Gustave Freitag.

- Aristotle focused on tragedy, and he identified two important types of scene:
    - **recognition** and **reversal**.
        - In **recognition**, the protagonist comes to a new understanding.
        - In **reversal** a situation is turned on its head.
    - In his key example, Oedipus, King of Thebes, is trying to discover the cause for a plague upon his city.
        - When he recognizers that HE is himself the cause, there is a reversal.
- Gustave Freitag believed dramas followed a set order. They start with

    1. **exposition** to let the audience know what the situation was
    2. an **inciting incident** which kicked off the main action,
    3. **rising action** of increasingly difficult or tense conflicts,

4. a **climax** consisting of an ultimate or be-all-end-all confrontation, followed by
5. a **resolution** which dissolves the problem and
6. a **denouement** or 'unknotting' in which all aspects of the problem unravel.

Aristotle and Freitag come together in a common contemporary idea of "three-act structure."



This image links to a web page on the topic.

This model's 'plot points' or 'twists' are Aristotle's reversals.

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2.2 Screenwriting and the Screenplay

A movie typically starts from a written document called a screenplay.

- A screenplay is a specialized document that forms the basis for film production.
- A screenplay indicates
    - where the events of the movie happen,
    - who's in the scenes,
    - what they do and say--thus
    - the overall story of the film.

Filmmakers use other documents (such as storyboards and production design sketches and models) to plan the visual aspects of the film.

Reading or leafing through the screenplay for a movie after you have watched it or while you're rewatching it can be very illuminating.

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2.4 Film as Story and Storytelling (aka Narrative)

We can also look at the story not from the perspective of **drama** (actions and conflict) but of **narrative**: story or storytelling.

The narrative perspective considers

(a) the story more as information and less as drama--

for example: how the information is arranged and parceled out to the viewer--

(b) how the story is told.

Here we distinguish **story vs. plot**.

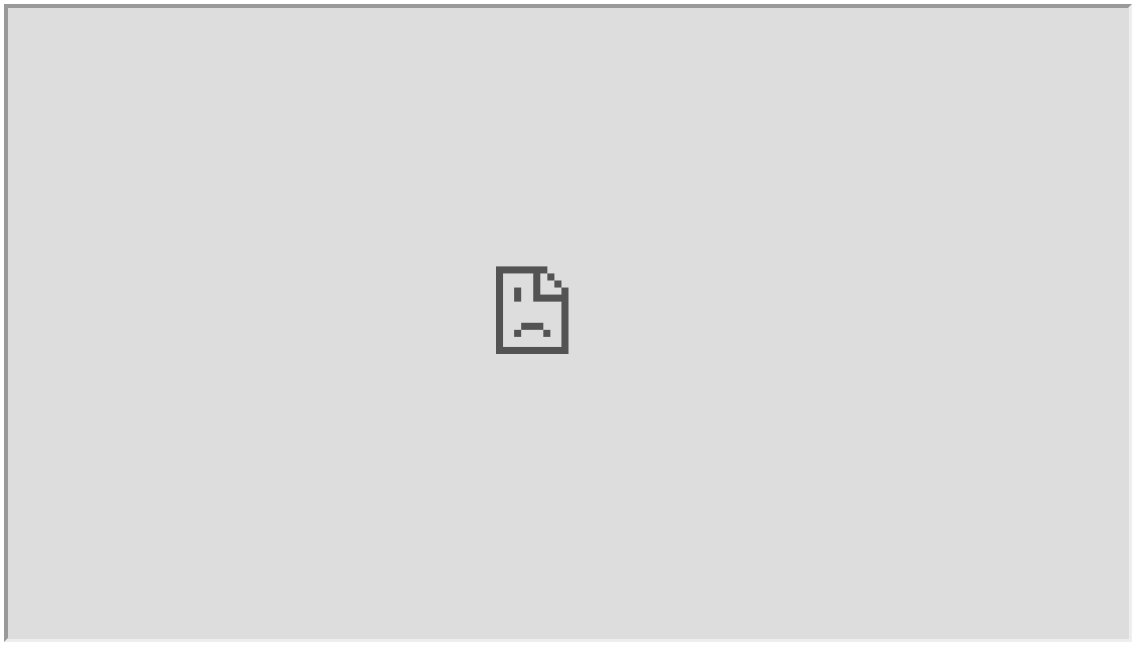
- The **story** is *what happens*.
- The **plot** is *how it is told*.

(Different people use different words to express the same distinction.)

Story and plot can be different in key ways:

order: An event in the story is told earlier or later.
duration: A long series of events in the story is compressed, or a short event is drawn out.
frequency: Something that happens a lot in the story is only shown a little, or vice-versa.

Consider the following clip from *Citizen Kane* (1941) from the perspective of duration and frequency.



Many years of the marriage go by: a long **duration** is compressed.

We don't see ALL the breakfasts: so we see the breakfasts with less **frequency** than they must have actually hapened.

Or Consider the familiar (if violent) nursery rhyme:

1. Jack and Jill went up the hill
2. To fetch a pail of water.
3. Jack fell down and broke his crown,
4. And Jill came tumbling after.

We could make a short movie and change the order:

1. Jill wakes up in the hospital with no memory.
2. Jack is in a coma.

3. Their mother comes and apologizes to Jill: "I should never have sent you up that hill."
4. Jill suddenly remembers Jack falling.

Stories can also be told with varying degrees of **restriction of information** or **focalization** or omniscience.

- We may be limited to what one character sees, hears, knows, or remembers.
- We may be "focalized" around one character.
- Or we may be in an omniscient position where we know all--more than the characters.

In our revised version of "Jack and Jill," we are limited to what Jill sees, knows, and remembers.

We could do it differently.

1. Jack lies in a hospital bed, asleep.
2. Jill lies beside him.
3. Jack wakes up. Looking at Jill, he remembers
4. walking up the hill with her to fetch some water.
5. Jill wakes up. "Where am I? What happened?"
6. "What's the last thing you remember?" Jack asks.
7. Jill: "I was playing with my dolls when mama sent us on an errand--but I don't remember to do what."
8. Jill is thirsty and the nurse brings her some water.
9. Suddenly, she remembers--
10. water spilling from a bucket as Jack falls and cracks his skull.

This focalizes the story around one character and then the other.

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2.5 Film as Story, Poem, Argument

We started with film as **drama**.

- Then we admitted films can also be seen as **stories**.

We did that because those are the most common ways of seeing movies.

But films can also

- make arguments
- or simply be poems: a series of 'rhyming' images,
    - images and sounds that form a pattern.

As categories or kinds or modes of film, these have names.

- The first is typically called a documentary.
- The second is usually seen as 'experimental.'

But at a very primary level, a series of images (or words or gestures) can

- tell a *story*
- imply an *argument*
- form a pattern--like a *poem*.

We can't really say:

- this is a story
- this is an argument

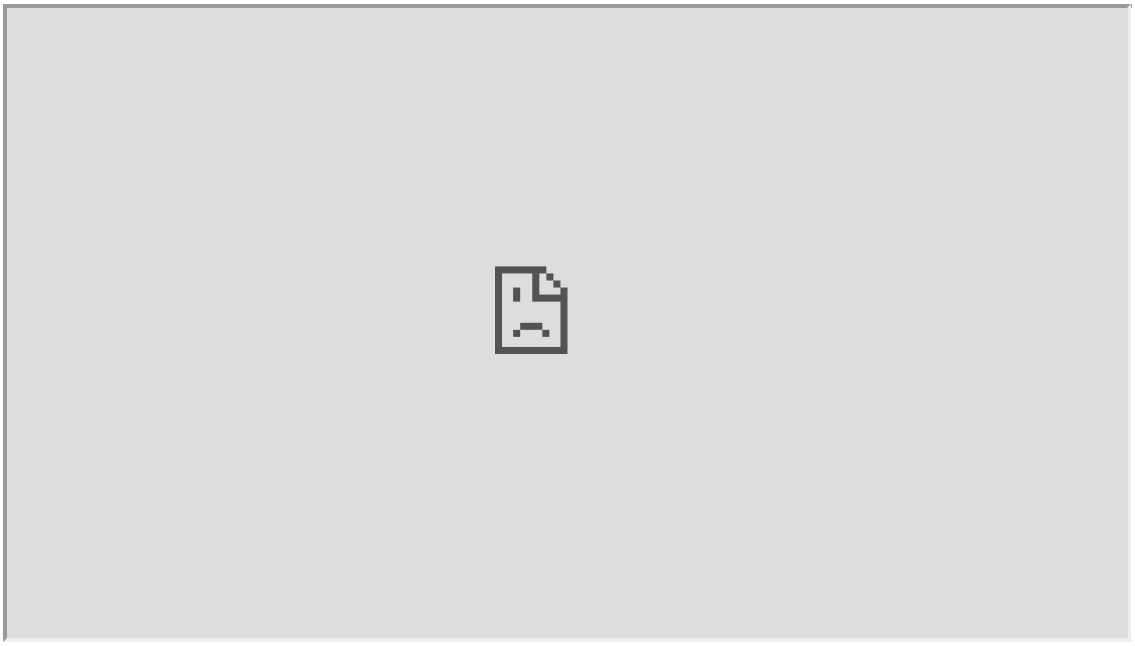
- this is a poem.

They're not separate categories, because a series of images (still or moving) can be two or three at once.

Rather,

- we *interpret* images as a **story** when we understand them as connected actions;
- we *interpret* images as an **argument**, when we infer a meaningful or consequential comparison or contrast in what's depicted, and
- we *read* images as a **poem** when we concentrate on the surface similarities--like rhymes and alliteration in a poem.

Consider this clip from *Koyaanisqatsi*.



Technically, *Koyaanisqatsi* is a documentary, because it's bits of reality: there are no 'actors' and no characters or story.

- But it seems to imply an argument--technology is harming us--but then it's also like a audio visual poem.
- Does it seem to you more one than another at specific moments?
- Why?

Further, we should really admit that a story can also be treated more like a poem.

- A story can be broken into little bits that 'rhyme' or resemble each other.
    - Such stories sometimes unfold like memory associations that move *around in time* rather than like a story that moves *forward* in time.
    - But we'll just 'stick a pin in that' for now: flag it for later discussion.

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Questionnaire 2.0 to 2.5: Segmentation, Drama, Story, Argument, Poem

In earlier questionnaires, you did some research on a film you're studying.

- You found some basic facts about it.
- You found another film to compare it to.
- And you found some critical discussions.
    - (In some cases, these were supplied for you.)

You also have a textbook you've chosen to use for this course. (These are mentioned in the FAQ's.)

1. Segmentation.

- How does your textbook describe different kind of sequences and scenes?
    - Provide a single representative quote, complete with the page number.
- Considering the film you're studying....
    - Are there one or two very clear scenes or sequences?
    - Are the chunks mostly unified by space and time? Or something else?
    - Does it have any single shots that could stand alone as scenes?
- If you broke the movie into just three or four chunks, what would those be and why?

- Do critics who wrote about your movie refer to the parts of the movie or significant parts?

2. Film as Drama

- How does your textbook explain dramatic structure--things like protagonist, antagonist, obstacle, etc.
- Can you summarize the film you're studying using six or eight key dramatic terms?
    - You should be able to do this even if it's a documentary.
- What might be good examples in the film of Aristotelean recognition and reversal?
    - These might be for the characters or people or companies represented.
    - They might also be *for the audience*.
- How might you describe the movie or its plot in terms of inciting incident, rising action, climax, resolution, and denouement?
- Does your film have the 'three-act structure' people find so common in Hollywood movies?
- Do critics who write about your movie refer to these elements of dramatic structure or use this terminology?

3. Film as Story

- How does your textbook explain storytelling or narrative?
    - Use one interesting and relevant quote and supply the page number.
- Can you identify differences in the movie you're studying between the story and the plot? That is: between what happens and how it's told?

    - Differences in order? We see earlier events later? Or vice-versa?
    - In duration? Something that takes weeks is speeded up to minutes?
    - In frequency? Something happens once but we see it more--or vice-versa?
- How does the movie control, restrict, or limit information?
    - Is the viewer limited to what specific people or characters know?
    - Is information withheld from the viewer to make the story more compelling?
    - Or does the audience know more than some of the characters?
- Do critics writing about your movie mention any aspects of storytelling? If so, which? Why do they feel the need to point them out?

4. Film as Story, Poem, Argument.

- If the film seems like a story, how is it an argument or poem?
    - Or if it seems mostly like an argument, how is it a story or poem?
- To consider the film as a poem, consider fast-forwarding or going backwards quickly.
    - Do you notice patterns of color?
    - Does the film use repeated sound elements to form a pattern the way a poem does?
- How does your textbook describe "experimental," "avant-garde," or "abstract" movies?

- Provide a quote with the page number and explain what part of that could apply to the film you're studying?

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3.0 The Camera: What It Shoots, What It Adds

Before going on, we can recap where we've been.

- Movies are economic products, works of art, and part of an institution or set of institutions--media, entertainment, what have you.
- Movies are made and seen, produced and received.
- Movies are unique and yet also have differences and similarities--in style and the conventions they follow.
    - Realism is the dominant global style.
- We can break movies down into linear parts.
    - In this way, movies are drama and story, but also argument or audiovisual 'poem.'
- Now we have come to the camera.
    - There's what's in front of the camera, as if the camera weren't there, and there's what the camera adds.
        - The first is called mise-en-scene: what the camera 'shoots.'
            - This means sets or locations, costumes, even performers.
            - It's basically everything you could have in a theater.
        - The second is called cinematography.
            - Cinematography is what the camera adds.
                - Think about the fishbowl effect of a very wide angle lens. Reality isn't really curved: it's just the camera's properties which make it seem so.

        - The camera adds a frame which doesn't exist in the theater.
    - (Special effects may blend cinematography and mise-en-scene.)
- "Mise-en-scene" literally means: putting in the scene (where 'scene' means: stage).
    - So mise-en-scene is **staging**: taking the story and 'getting it on its feet,' making people act it out on sets with props.

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3.1 Mise-en-scene and Visual Analysis

Mise-en-scene is the French term for staging a play in the theater.

- "Mise-en-scene" literally means: putting in the scene (where 'scene' means: stage).
    - So mise-en-scene is **staging**: taking the story and 'getting it on its feet,' making people act it out on sets with props.

In English-speaking countries, mise-en-scene can refer generally to staging the action of a shot.

But more typically and more broadly mise-en-scene refers to **everything we see on the screen that could be seen on a theater stage**:

- sets or locations,
- lighting,
- props,
- costumes,
- make-up.

Mise-en-scene is, in effect, everything in cinema that's also in theater--but nothing that's in cinema that's NOT in theater.

> So mise-en-scene is not about what the camera adds to the sets by its angle or position.

Principles of Visual Analysis

When we analyze visual artifacts, we can pay attention to certain organizing principles. These are:

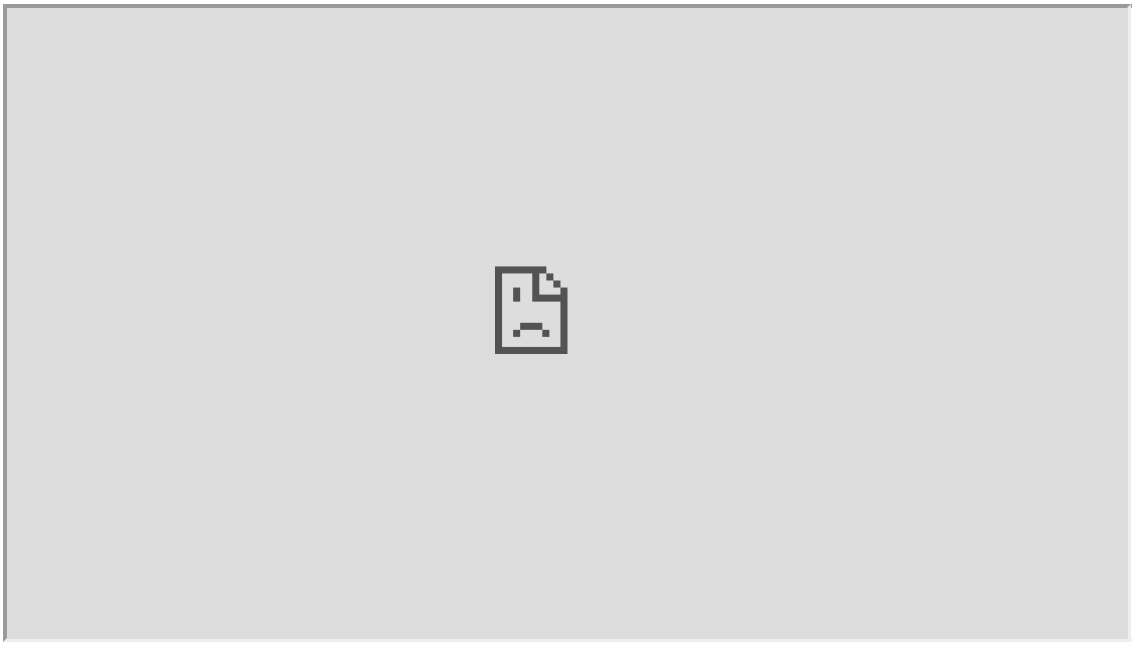
contrast and similarity,

symmetry and asymmetry.

- Contrast makes us notice things: black vs. white, color vs. shades of gray, silks dresses vs. drab rags.
- Symmetry can bring a strong sense of order.
- And asymmetry can suggest imbalance.

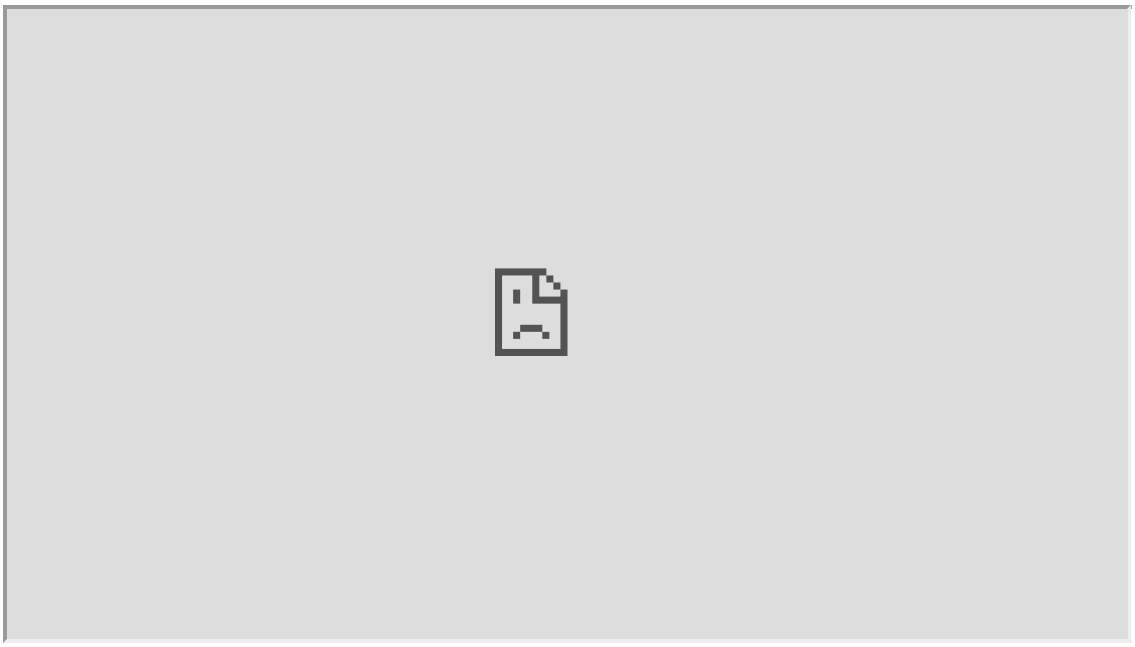
For instance:

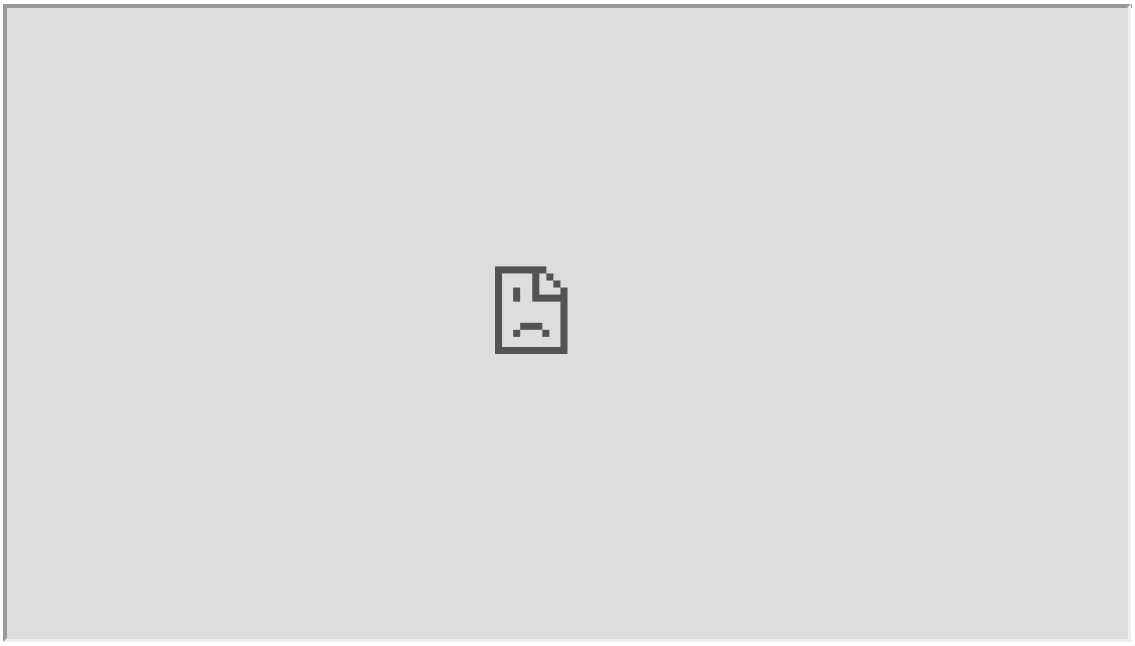
- high-key lighting is brighter and has less contrast--there is less difference between the brightest and darkest elements of the shot--where low-key lighting is overall darker but has may have a greater contrast of dark-to-light.



- In color films, color and color schemes are important.
    - Colors may be more saturated or more muted.

- Musicals often have more saturated colors, and serious dramas tend to use more muted colors.
    - Imagine a character dealing with the death of her mother wearing a bright purple dress. It would seem odd.





A prop may be a light sabre. A costume may be ruby slippers. A set may be a space ship.

Hard to make movies without them--unless of course, everything is digital...

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3.2 Performance

Performances in movies go beyond acting.

- Stunt performers perform.
- So do extras, who may not speak and may be barely visible.
- A specialized kind of actor also plays corpses.

Acting is a special kind of performance.

We usually interpret acting in terms of realism or verisimilitude:

- the idea that it's believable that this person (for example) is in love, is a race car driver, a spy, etc.
    - When Charlize Theron plays a highly-trained assassin, the physical performance of the stunts by the actress helps make you believe the rather far-fetched spy plot.

Acting can be also thought of as <u>expressing thoughts and feelings of the character.</u>

- Because so much acting takes place in close-up, we tend to concentrate on how actors' eyes and faces express their thoughts and feelings.
- But physical demeanor and gestures also matter.
    - If you think of the original (1932) movie *Frankenstein*, a great deal of the 'acting' come from bodily postures and gestures.
- But people also hide their feelings, and so sometimes actors must convincingly portray THAT they are hiding something--revealing and

concealing at the same time.

Stars are a special sort of actor.

- They are already known to the audience, and all their past roles inform how we watch their performances.
    - Stars tend to play a consistent kind of character.
        - If you think of Tom Cruise, his character may be named "Jack" and he may do a lot of running.

Hollywood movies often prefer types and stereotypes over minutely realistic acting.

- Theater long relied upon types.
    - The leading man and leading woman were attractive and between 30 and 50.
    - The ingenue and juvenile (young woman and man) were teens to 20's and had to fall in love.
    - We see an actor and quickly identify them by clothes and hair as a specific type: the dumb muscle man, the ditzy blond, the dim redneck, etc.
        - Some stereotypes are more offensive than others.

As opposed to stars, character actors are actors who go beyond the leading man/woman, ingenue/juvenile range: it's the odd cleaning lady, the gruff detective, the crotchety old person, etc.

Finally, some directors use or even prefer non-professional actors for more authentic or just plain subdued performances.

Analytical questions you might answer about this topic include the following:

- Is the acting realistic or non-realistic?
- What role do physical movements and gestures play in the performances?
- Are the actors stars or unknowns? Types--such as leading man, ingenue, etc., or character actors? Professional actors or non-professionals?
- If they are stars, what associations would the audience have had with those performers?
- Why cast and direct the roles in this way--and not another? (E.g., why choose stars vs. non-professionals, this star vs. that?)

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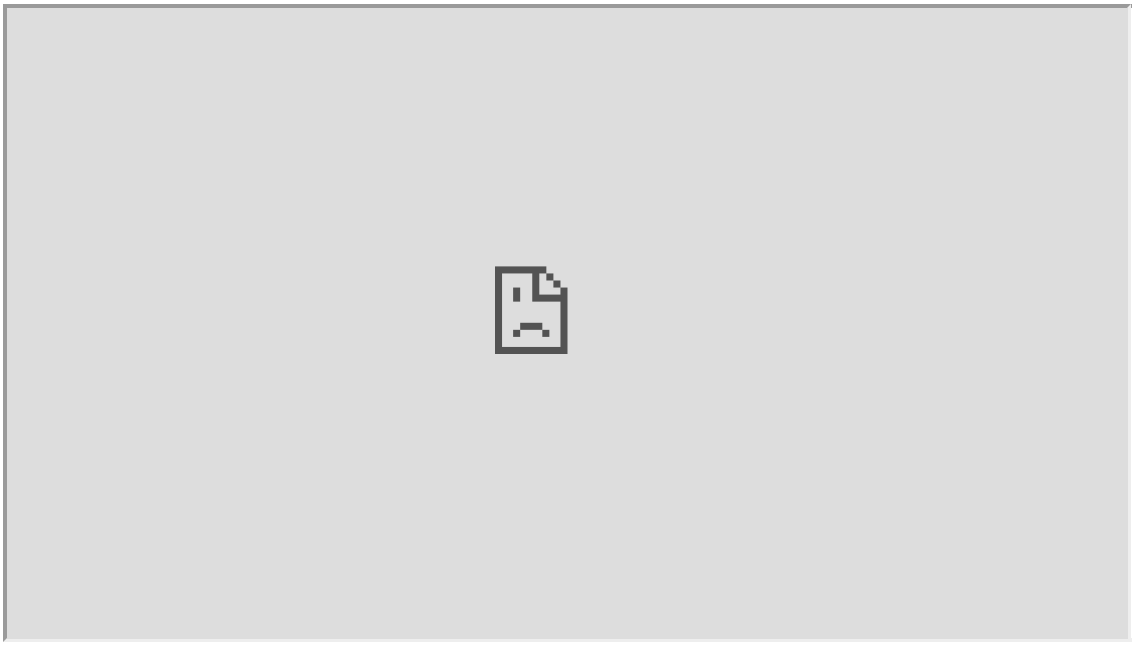
3.3 Techniques

- We have been considering movies 'in order': from making to viewing.
- And we have been considering movies 'as' this or that:
    - as social institutions:
        - corporations or groups or individuals making films,
        - the people who review or 'professionally consume' films, etc.
    - as linear
        - meaning as unfolding from beginning to end:
            - as a story,
            - as a drama,
            - as an argument, etc.
- Now **we start looking at films 'in depth.'**
    - This means s**everal things are going on at once** in a movie:
        - we see sets and costumes,
        - actors are acting,
        - there is sound and
        - there are special effects,
        - etc.
- So instead of being about the institutions and social processes or about a linear unfolding, now we will be looking at **techniques**.
    - Techniques are very **multidimensional**.
        - The camera can be positioned close or far from the actors.
        - The camera can be

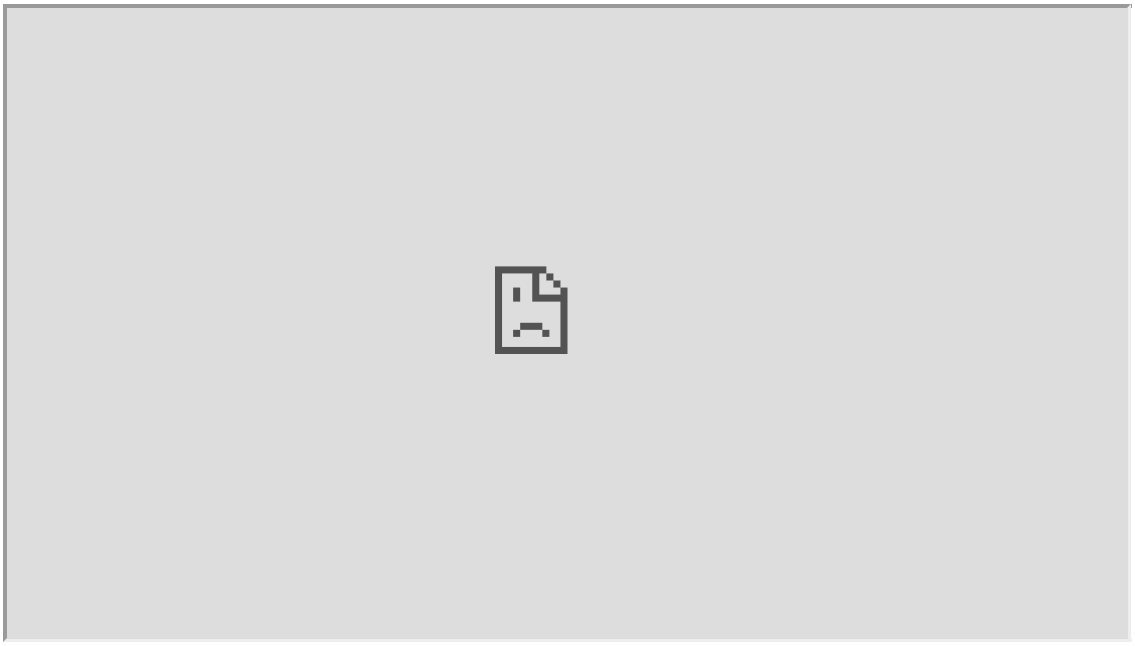
        - high off the ground looking down at the actors or
        - low down looking up at them.

Multidimensional Techniques--for Irony

- In his 1941 movie *Citizen Kane,* director Orson Welles plays with the camera's **distance** from the actors and the camera's **height** (off the ground) and **angle**.
    - We first meet Charles Foster Kane as a boy.
        - We see him outside in an extreme long shot.
        - The camera is actually INSIDE the house he's playing outside of.
    - The camera pulls back and back--and young Kane remains in the shot getting tinier and tinier.
        - His parents and banker-guardian then play out the adult drama of what will happen to the young boy.
        - The mother dominates the shot: the camera seems to move when she moves.
        - The father is impotent, but when he makes a last bid for significance in the boy's life, he steps towards the camera so it's looking upward at him.
            - He has stature but not power, and one he's offered money, he folds like a cheap suit.



- In the same film, director Orson Welles also put the camera BELOW FLOOR LEVEL to look UP at his TOWERING characters.
    - Charles Foster Kane is at a low point in his life, and yet the low angle--what?--exaggerates his height?
    - The choice seems ironic.



So this week you'll start learning about film techniques.

And of course, you'll be asked to think about patterns and functions and contrast.

- Why this technique used here? To do what?
- Why this technique used here--and not there?

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3.31 Cinematography

Cinematography involves **what the camera adds to or subtracts from mise-en-scene.**

- Cinematography starts before the camera rolls.
    - **The film** itself may be
        - color or black-and-white,
        - more sensitive to light (but grainier) or less sensitive (but showing more fine detail).

- Feature films used to be shot on 35mm film (that's the width of the film or the height of the frame).
- But amateur films were shot on 16mm or 8mm film.
- Now digital cameras have eliminated film as a medium from much film production.

Every **movie frame** has a shape, usually rectangular, and thus an aspect-ratio: how the width compares to the height.

- 16x9 is a typical ratio today, but in the past it was closer to 1:1.
- It was 4:3 or 1.33:1.

This means every **director of photography** must decide how the world fits into that frame.

- So framing starts with a decision about what's outside the frame vs. inside it.
    - This becomes very important in, for instance, horror movies, where something terrifying may be hidden within the frame in the darkness of mise-en-scene or just outside the frame.

The movie camera shapes what it films through the **focal length** of the lens.

- We have all seen those wide angle shots where a ton of space is crammed into the frame, perhaps distorted with a 'fisheye' effect: the 'focal length' is greater than 35 millimeters.
- Often we don't notice that close-ups are frequently shot with a longer lens: say, greater than 70 millimeters.
  - This does the opposite of distorting: it makes the actor's face less jagged.

The **camera position** includes

distance from its subject,

height (off the 'ground'),

(front-to-back) **angle** , and

(side-to-side) **level**.

Thus the camera can give everything from

- an extreme close-up (ECU)
- to an extreme long shot (ELS).

In general, a shot may be

close, medium, or long;

extreme or medium.

The combinations are usually imagined in terms of how they frame a human body:

ECU (extreme close-up): an eye or ear, for example;

CU (close-up): head and shoulders;

MS (medium shot): waist up;

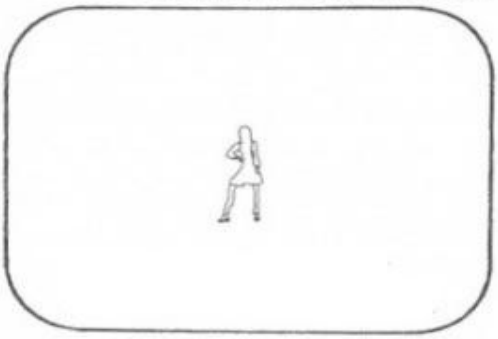
MLS (medium long shot): thighs up;

LS (long shot): including feet; or

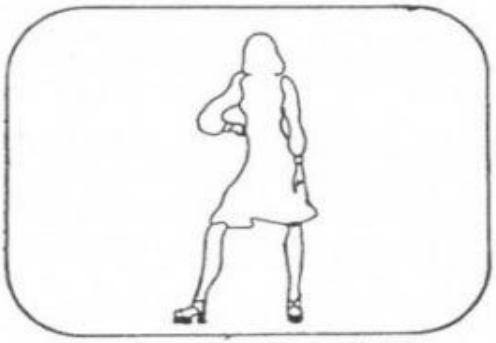
ELS (extreme long shot): small human figures.

The web has a million graphics for these:

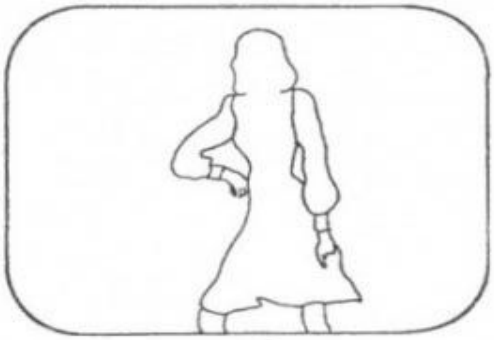
STANDARD TERMINOLOGY OF SHOT SIZES



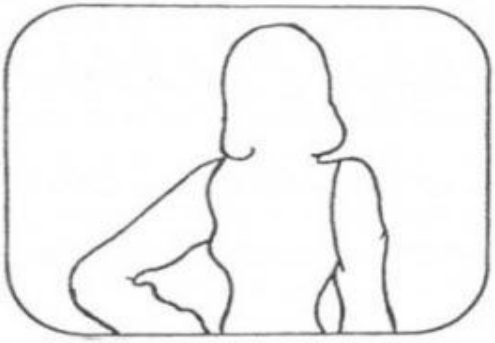
1. Wide Shot (WS)



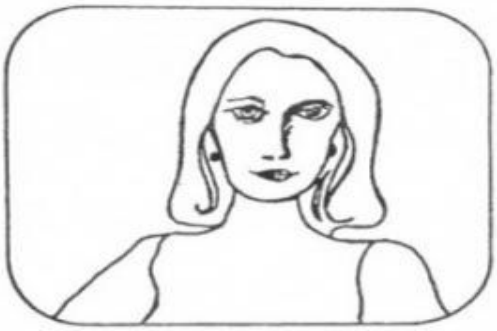
2. Long Shot (LS)



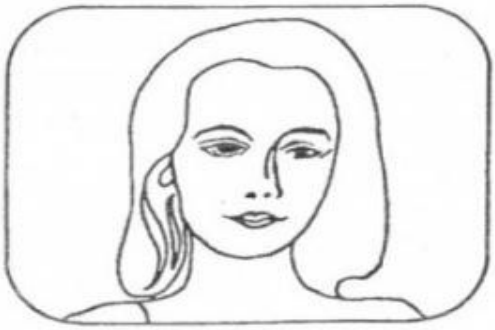
3. Medium Long Shot (MLS)



4. Mid Shot (MS)



5. Medium Close Up (MCU)



6. Close Up (CU)

7. Big Close Up (BCU)

8. Extreme Close Up (ECU)

The camera can be

high or low off the ground.

This may cause the angle to be

high (looking from above) or

low (looking upward).

And the camera may also be **canted** from side to side (horizontally in relation to the ground).

Imagine which choices are used in a horror movie and which in a romantic comedy and you will begin to get some idea of how cinematography can shape the way we respond to a movie.

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3.4 Special Effects (FX)

Special effects, also called FX or "visual effects" pretty much covers anything where (a) an illusion is created for the audience that there was something in front of the camera which is drastically different than it really was.

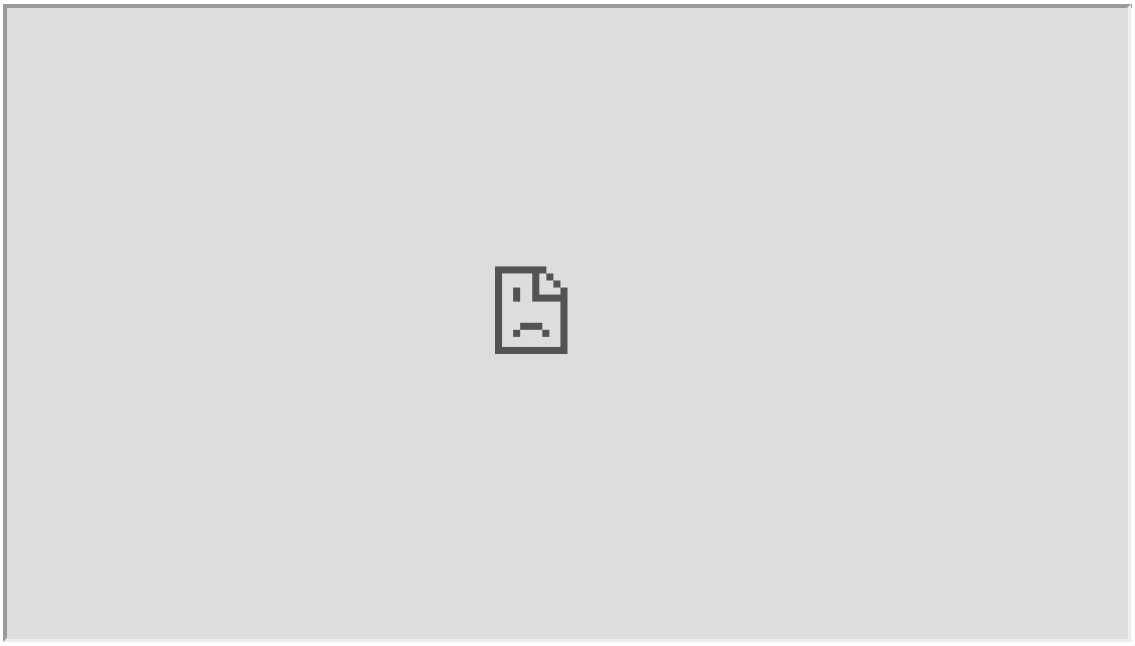
This is tricky, because George Clooney is not really Batman, and so in some way *nothing* in front of the camera in a fiction film is what it really is.

- Daniel Day-Louis pretends to be Lincoln.
- Sets pretend to be real houses.
- The studio "back lot" pretends to be a real small town, not some fake buildings in Burbank.

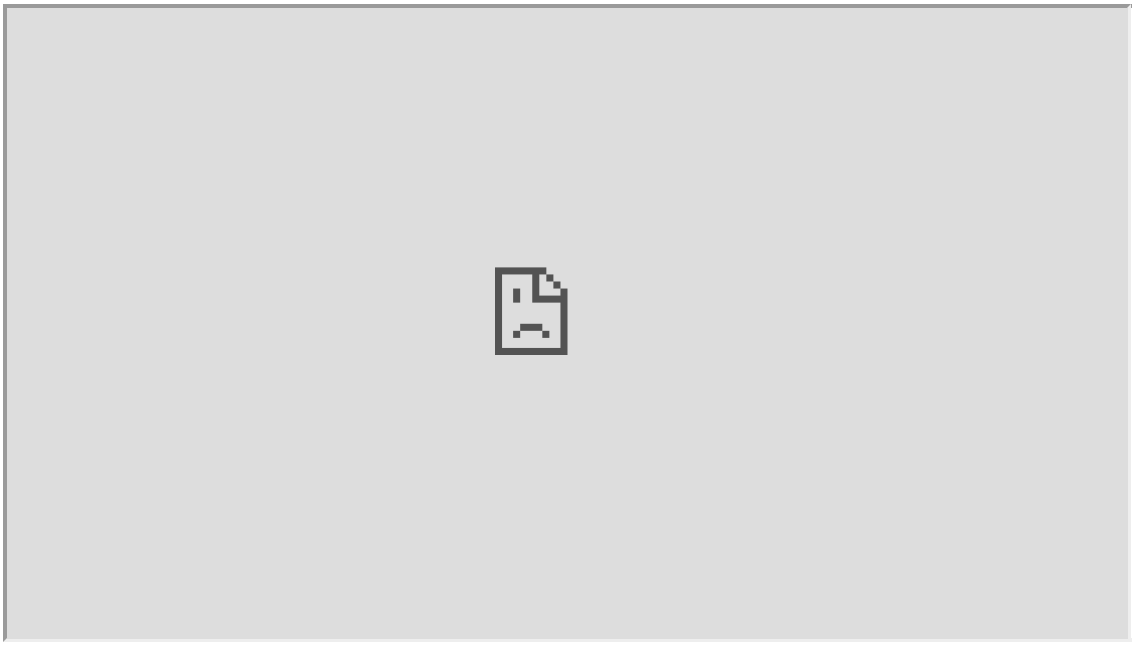
So it's a question of degree.

- When the camera is shut on and off to make someone appear or disappear, that's a special effect.
- When the film is exposed twice to make a ghost or devil appear, that's a special effect.

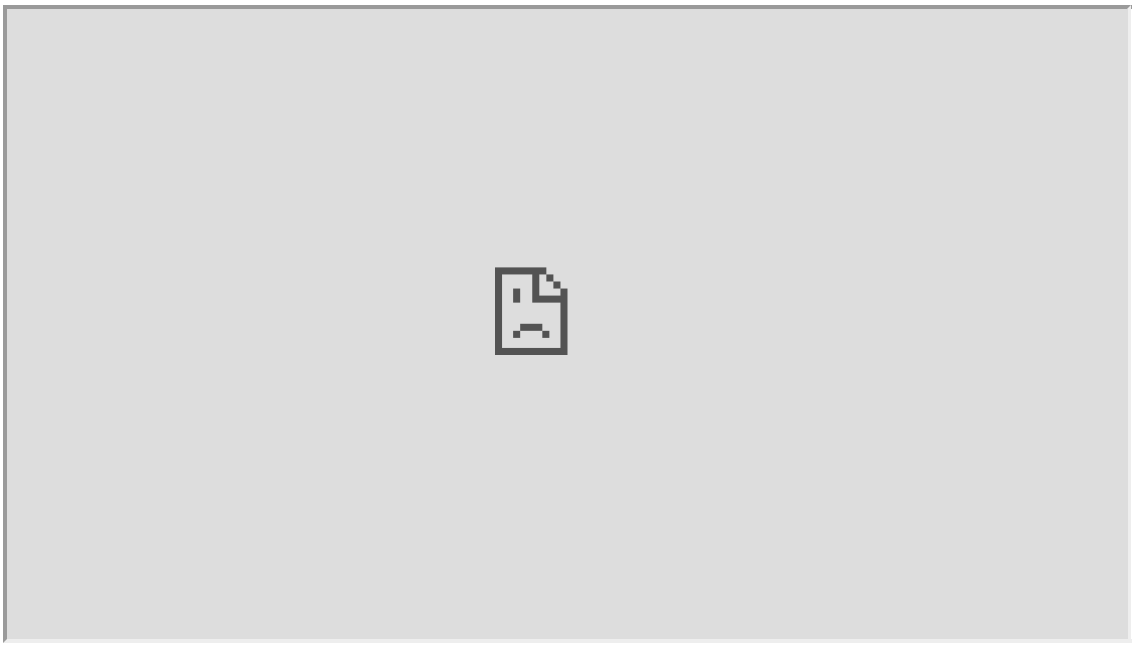
These effects were created by one of the films filmmakers George Melies back in the early 1900's. This class project shows some of the wonderful illusions Melies created--largely in an attempt to reproduce and even improve upon stage 'magic shows' of the time.



Early filmmakers of the nineteen teens and twenties were quite creative in their FX.



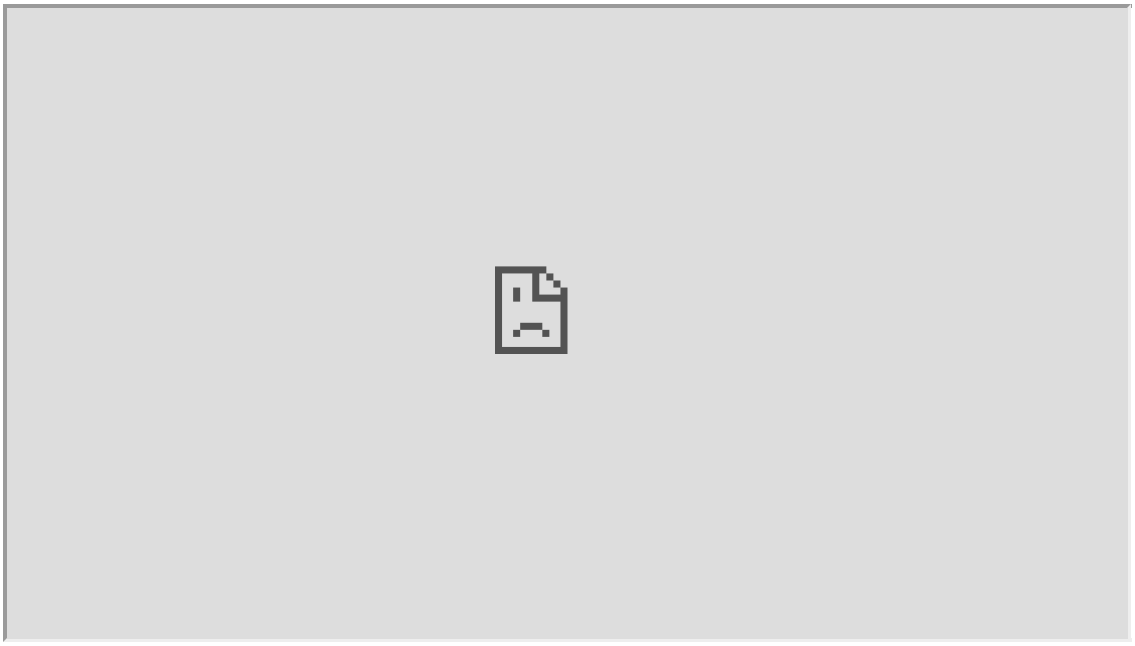
Still other kinds of special effects can be created by arranging sets and performers at specific angles to create an illusion of scale or size by "**forced perspective**."



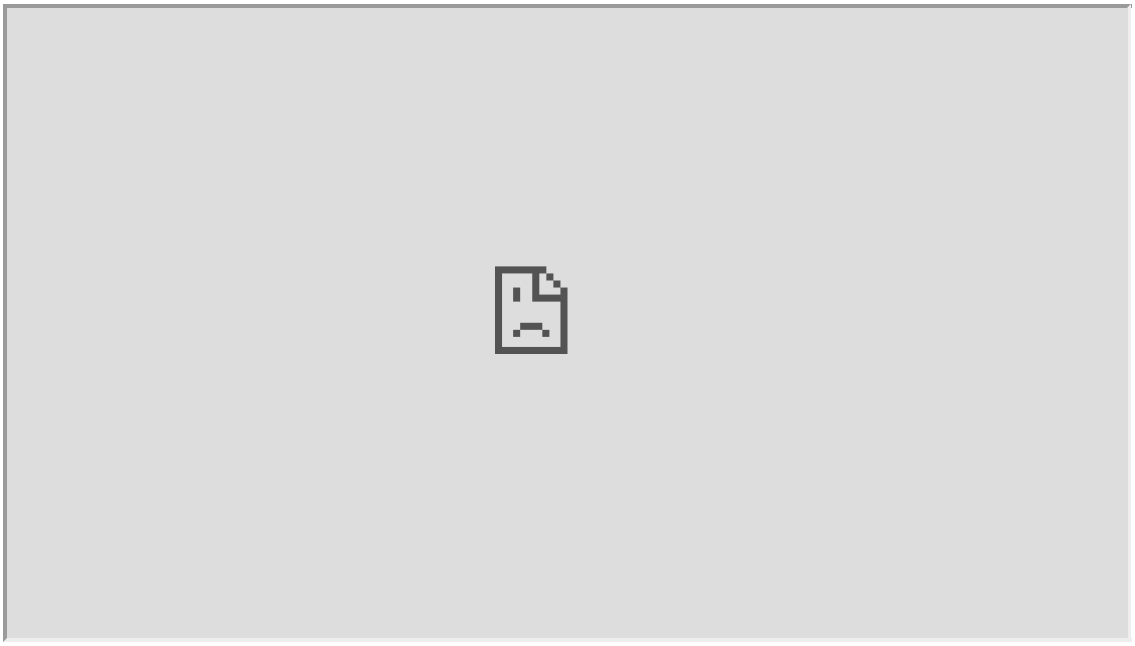
Miniatures have often been animated by moving and shooting them one frame at a time. 1933's KING KONG is a good example.

Sometimes these were projected behind live actors who times their movements so the real, normal-sized human beings seemed to be fighting or interacting with larger-than-life or impossible creatures.

Special ways of filming and lenses, or special ways of combining strips of film after shooting were quite common in the past.



In between, computer-controlled miniatures and camera movements made the optical matte shots smoother and more believable. 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY used this and other techniques.



Of course, now that movies are often shot in a digital format onto memory cards instead of on film, it is much easier to use computers to manipulate the images we wee.

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3.0 - 3.4 SUMMARY From Mise-en-Scene and Cinematography to Performance and FX

Mise-en-Scene vs. Cinematography

- Mise-en-scene refers to everything in front of the camera: what gets filmed.
- Cinematography is what the camera adds (or subtracts) by filming.
    - Shooting on black-and-white film REMOVES color.
    - Anywhere you put a camera, you INCLUDE something (INSIDE the frame) and EXCLUDE something (what's OUTSIDE the frame).

About Frames and Frame Analysis

- Either mise-en-scene cinematography can be analyzed by using individual frames of film.
    - These can be called "still frames" or "frame grabs" or "frame captures."
    - "Production stills" are photographs taken during a film's production: they may emulate what we see in the film, but they are not actual shots from the film itself.
- Mise-en-scene is important during pre-production and production.
    - Artificial sets must be built or locations found and "dressed" (decorated with props, painted, etc.)
- Cinematography is also planned in pre-production and executed in post-production.

    - But cinematography is key to post-production: when film is developed and carefully printed to make the final film, or when the digital images are digitally "color-graded" to make the final 'digital print.'

Realism & Contrast Again

- As elsewhere, we have seen that movies can be very realistic or very unrealistic--but it's relative.
    - *The Wizard of Oz* and *Star Wars* are less realistic than *The Truman Show*, but they are all fictions.
- Mise-en-scene and cinematography are both visual patterns, and so contrast makes us notice things in them.

Performance and FX

- Performance is sometimes seen as part of mise-en-scene: because the actor must be in front of a camera (or a microphone) to be captured.
    - In realistic films, "performance" is acting: simulating being another person, the fictional character.
    - But other performers include stunt performers and extras or 'background artists.'
- Most performances are given during production.
    - But some vocal performances are added or changed during post-production: also known as 'dubbing' or 'ADR' (automated dialogue replacement).

Pre-production, Production, and Post-production.

- Special effects or "FX" is a mix of what's in front of the camera and the camera itself.
- And FX can be largely executed in pre-production and production, or it can be part of post-production.
    - For example, the position of the camera may make small objects look bigger.
        - So this is planned in pre-production and executed in production.
        - But then these pieces of film or digital video may need to be combined in a special way in post-production.

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Questionnaire 3.0 to 3.4: Mise-en-Scene, Cinematography, Performance, Special Effects

In earlier questionnaires, you did some research on a film you're studying.

- You found some basic facts about it.
- You found another film to compare it to.
- And you found some critical discussions.
    - (In some cases, these were supplied for you.)

You also have a textbook you've chosen to use for this course. (These are mentioned in the FAQ's.)

In this questionnaire, you'll be asked to connect the research you did to this week's film concepts and your own memories and experiences of the films you're analyzing.

1. Mise-en-Scene and Visual Analysis.

- How does your textbook explain mise-en-scene?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- What is a good (to you) example of mise-en-scene in your textbook?
- Find a clip on Youtube or elsewhere explaining mise-en-scene--preferably less than ten minutes.
- What are the typical and extreme elements of the mise-en-scene in your film? I.e., what you see a lot of, what you see only a little of.
- Consider:

    - sets or locations,
    - lighting,
    - props,
    - costumes,
    - make-up, and
    - the staging of actions.
- Consider also: the range of colors, brightness and darkness.

- What is normal and typical for that genre of film?
- What do critics, reviewers notice or mention about the mise-en-scene?
- What do articles discussing the production of the film mention that bears on mise-en-scene?

2. Performances

- How does your textbook explain performance and acting?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- Are the performances in the film you're analyzing more realistic? Or more exaggerated and stylized?
    - If considering a documentary, how does it seem 'real' and 'not acting'?
    - How are the performances typical for the genre--or exceptional? (For example, in a horror movie, the monster's often has distinct physical movement and speech or vocal sounds--like Frankenstein's monster or Dracula.)
- What performances stand out more in terms of facial expression, voice, and movement?

    - Are some performances more expressive? More inexpressive?
- Does the film you're studying have star performances?
    - What associations do you have with the performers from their other performances?
- Are the roles "types"?
    - E.g., leading man, leading woman, ingenue, juvenile?
    - Are there other character types or stereotypes?
    - They might also be *for the audience*.

3. Cinematography

- What is normal and typical in the cinematography of the film you're studying?
    - E.g., a horror movie might typically be dark and mysterious--yet yours is brightly lit?
    - Or yours might be an exceptional horror movie--one where everything is bright and cheerful....
- What is unusual in the film you're studying?
    - For instance, if there were almost no close-up's except for one.
    - Or the camera never moved except for a few times.
- Consider:
    - camera angles (wider vs. narrower),
    - framing (close-up vs. longshot, etc.)
    - camera position (high vs. low, level vs. 'canted').
- How does the cinematography relate to the genre?

4. Special Effects

- Does your movie have special FX?
    - Why? Serving what purpose?
    - To simulate reality? Does it do that persuasively? Or are the effects obviously fake?
- Can you find any articles or videos on the special FX in the movie?
- Do the FX seem to be camera trickery? Or digital?

5. Functions

- Considering the elements in the questions above, what functionsmight mise-en-scene, performance, cinematography, and FX be playing?
    - E.g., lighting might advance the story or express the character's feelings, etc.

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4.0 Combining: Shots, Images and Sounds

- Films are products, works of art, a part of social institutions.
- Films are made and received, interpreted and analyzed.
    - Their form shapes our experience of them.
    - They are unique, similar to each other, different from each other.
- Films are linear: dramas, stories, arguments, poems.
    - They can be parsed into meaningful chunks.
- What's in front of the camera is modified by the camera and what's done with it.
- And films are spliced together in a line: one shot after another.
- And films are also spliced together 'in depth': by combining images and sounds.
- The first splicing is called **editing**.
- The second kind of splicing involves **sound**, including **music**.

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4.1 Editing

Editing is everything beyond a single shot.

- The idea of editing stretches from the whole film as a chain of shots down to
- individual segments as especially coherent batches of shots:
    - they're not just near each other; they're meaningfully connected.
- Earlier, we looked at segmentation as breaking a film down into chunks.
    - Those chunks also cohere or hang together because of editing.

Shots may be joined together in many ways:

no overlap whatever: a **cut**,

a slow movement from one image to another: **dissolve**, aka cross-dissolve.

More important than individual edits are systems of editing.

- **Analytical editing** refers to the idea of breaking a long or wide shot down into smaller close-up's.
  Continuity editing is a system which allows the audience to make out the spatial arrangements from shot to shot.
    - It ensures that what's right and left stay consistent from shot to shot.

The system of continuity editing consists of

two rules,

two matches, and

two patterns.

The rules are

the 180-degree rule and
the 30-degree rule.

- The 180-degree rule says that the camera's line of sight cannot be more than 180 degrees from shot to shot.
  - Otherwise what's right and left would flip around, confusing the audience.
- The 30-degree rule says that successive shots must be at least 30 degrees apart.
  - Otherwise it will just look like we're seeing the same thing twice for no reason.

The matches are

matches-on-action and

eyeline matches.

- A match-on-action is when one shot begins where the action in the prior shot left off.
  - Otherwise, a part of the action is missing or repeated--as if time is skipping like an old record.
- An eyeline match is where one shot seems to be where the person in the prior shot was looking.

        - If someone looks to the left in the first shot, and someone looks back to the right in the next shot, the eyelines match.
        - If you do it differently, it seems like two people are looking at something else, not at each other.

    The patterns are:

    shot-reverse shot and

    master shot-closeup (analytical editing).

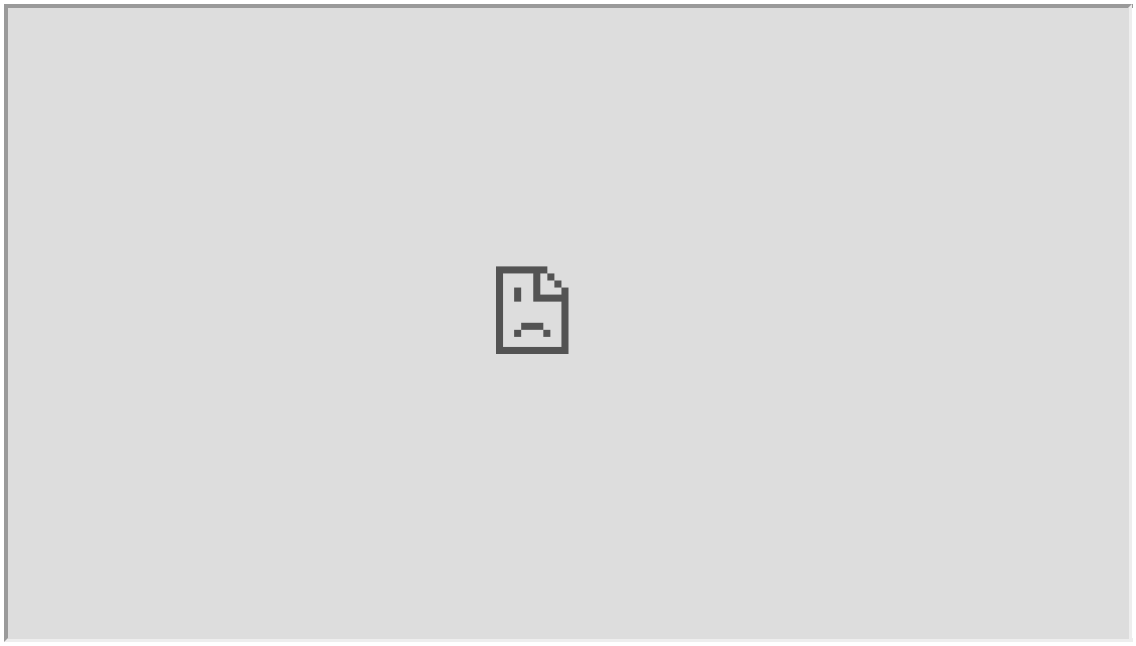
        - Shot-reverse shot is: a person and what she sees.
        - Master shot-closeup is a wide shot and then a smaller slice of it (analytical editing described above).

All of these together ensure that the audience sees a coherent physical reality.

- Which can easily be faked.
- When the continuity system is broken we get things like jump cuts: the physical reality of one shot not matching up with the next.

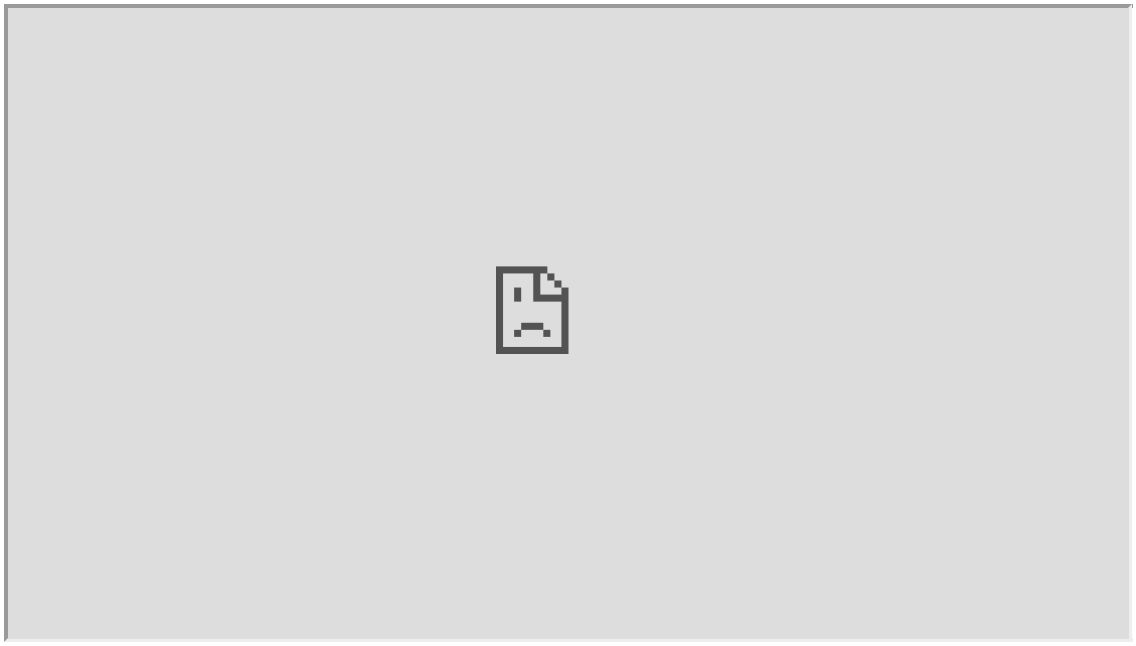
Some Examples

This video explains the 180-degree rule very neatly.



Breaking the 180-degree rule can be subtle yet shocking.

- In Stanley Kubrick's 1980 film *The Shining*, the winter caretaker played by Jack Nicholson starts imagining the hotel is populated by guests and staff from the 1920's.
    - When he goes into the bathroom, there's even an attendant named Grady.



    - Jack knows that Grady was the previous caretaker who went crazy and killed his family.
    - When Jack realizes he's talking to a dead man, the camera cuts from one side of the 180-degree line to another.
    - Jack and the caretaker flip positions on the screen more than once.
        - Both men are on the right of the screen looking left.
        - Jack, in other words, is too much like the previous caretaker!

Analyzing Continuity Editing

- Segmentation breaks a movie down into chunks.
- A "shot breakdown" analyzes the shots in one of those chunks to see how they cohere or 'hang together.'
    - A table is a typical way to do this. For example:

Shot	Shot Subject	Shot Function	Shot	Matches

Number			Framing	
1	Maude reading in a living room.	Establishing Shot	LS	
2	Tony enters.	Shot	MS	match on action
3	Maude looks up.	Reverse shot	MS	eyeline match
4	Tony sits.	Shot	CU	match on action
5	Maude rises.	Reverse shot	CU	eyeline match, match on action
6	Maude leaves.		LS	match on action

Alternative Systems

Alternatives to continuity include Soviet montage and 'parametric narration.'

- Those are too complex to explain in a small space.

There is also an idea that a film may not be an image of space and time but more an image of time and memory.

- But that again is a topic for "another day."

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4.2 Sound & Music

At the same time movie viewers watch a stream of images, they also hear a stream of sounds.

- So almost every feature film exists in those two dimensions at once.
- In general, however, the sound is subordinated to the image, and so what we hear is seldom 100% detached from the image.
    - Most commonly, sound *reinforces* and *clarifies* what we see.

Most movies today are shot with synchronized sound or **sync sound**: the sound is recorded at the same time as the image, and so the two always match. (Sync sound was perfected and rolled out commercially in the U.S. in the late 1920's.)

- Frequently nowadays a lot of dialogue is added later.
    - This process is called **ADR**: automated dialogue replacement.
    - The old name was **dubbing** or post-sync sound.
- Italian movies from the 40's through the 60's were often recorded without live sync sound, and all the sound was added later, including dubbing the dialogue.
    - This meant they could use French and German actors, all speaking their own language, and then the dubbing was done in several languages for maximum profit.

Sometimes filmmakers shoot without sound.

- This is sometimes called shooting "**MOS**."

    - Legend has it that a German director would say "Now we will shoot mit out sound."
    - "Mit" is German for "with."
    - So "MOS" became the abbreviation that is still used in scripts today.

Music is another important element of movie sound.

- Both sound and music may be diegetic or non-diegetic.
    - **Diegetic** means: story-related, coming from inside the world of the story.
    - **Non-diegetic** means: it's not a part of the story universe.
        - So when a radio is playing in the story, that's diegetic sound.
        - When a symphony orchestra plays and expresses the characters' feelings, that's non-diegetic.
    - Some movies have fun confusing the audience about which is which.
- Further, sound and music may be **subjective** or **objective**.
    - Sometimes we hear sounds that a character may be 'hearing' in his mind or that simply express the character's thought processes or emotions.
    - Both subjective and objective music are diegetic.

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Questionnaire 4.1 to 4.2: Editing, Sound & Music

In earlier questionnaires, you did some research on a film you're studying.

- You found some basic facts about it.
- You found another film to compare it to.
- And you found some critical discussions.
    - (In some cases, these were supplied for you.)

You also have a textbook you've chosen to use for this course. (These are mentioned in the FAQ's.)

In this questionnaire, you'll be asked to connect the research you did to this week's film concepts.

1. Editing Part A

- How does your textbook explain editing?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- What different systems of editing, beyond "continuity editing," does your book list?
- What is a good (to you) example of editing in your textbook?
- Find a clip on Youtube or elsewhere explaining editing--preferably less than ten minutes.
- Considering the film you're analyzing:

    - What are the typical and extreme elements of the editing in your film? I.e., what you see a lot of, what you see only a little of.
- Does your film use continuity editing?:
    - Are there any ruptures, mistakes, shenanigans, variations?
    - Is that what you would expect from this genre or story?
        - For instance, in horror films, monsters might be kept from sight to generate suspense.
        - Or sudden surprising edits may be used to create 'jump scares.'
- Do the reviews or any other articles you have about the movie mention the editing specifically?
    - If so, what do they say?
    - If not, why do you think not?

2. Editing Part B

- Pick a short segment of the movie where the editing is notable.
    - It can be typical for the film or unusual for the film.
- Make a shot list or table listing all the shots.
    - Obviously, try to stick to a segment with a dozen shots or fewer.
    - What patterns do you see? For instance:
        - Is it mostly medium close-up's?
        - Does it begin and end in a similar way?
        - Do you see anything that seems strange or atypical for films of that kind? For instance: a total lack of

establishing shots. Why might the film have been edited that way?

- What is interesting or significant about the segment?
    - How is the segment characteristic of or revealing about the film?
        - E.g., how does the segment part of the film's larger strategies, goals, or ideas?
    - Does the segment use continuity editing--or rupture it? Or does it use some other system or pattern (like "montage")?
    - How does the editing do things like: keep the viewer involved--for instance, evoking interest, sympathy, or suspense on the part of the viewer?

3. Sound Music

- How does your textbook explain sound music?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- What is typical for the film in terms of sound and music?
    - Are the sound and music more subjective or objective?
    - Is the music the style you expect?
        - Is it 'movie music' with an orchestra? Or popular songs used to keep the movie lively and familiar?
        - Is the instrumentation and style of the music unusual? E.g., xylophones and kazoo's instead of violins? Jazz instead of 'movie music'?
    - How much of the music is diegetic (coming from the story world) vs. non-diegetic?
        - Why was it done that way--and not some other?

- Is anything else notable about the sound or music?

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Questionnaire Omnibus

Questionnaire 1.01: Movies, Cinema, and Film

The same movie can be viewed as a movie, a part of cinema, or a film. That is:

- as a part of the business of making movies to make money,
- as a part of the institutions which shape our habits of watching and talking about movies, and
- as an 'aesthetic experience': a film compared to other films, an exploitation of the medium, a 'callback' to other films.

The following steps and questions are designed to help you wrap your head around the idea of seeing movies from these three perspectives.

1. What are the relevant facts about the movie as a business proposition?
    - How much was spent on it?
    - How much did it make? Domestically? Abroad?
    - For this information, consider checking websites like Box Office Mojo (Links to an external site.) and The Numbers Dot Com (Links to an external site.) .
    - Consider also searching the film's title in a database focusing on newspapers--like Newspaper Source Plus (Links to an external site.) .
2. What can you find out about the film's production and distribution?
    - Was it late? Were there setbacks or delays due to casting? Conflicts among the filmmakers?

    - A search of newspaper databases or a Google or Bing search focusing on "News" should turn up some things.
3. How was the film received?
    - This can also be disclosed by a news search.
    - Metacritic.com (Links to an external site.) can also give you a quick overview of reviews from major newspapers and magazines.
4. Find three critical discussions that seem to you typical or interesting: one journalistic, one scholarly, and one from a fan or ordinary web user.
    - How was the film received? Well? Poorly? As an effective commercial entertainment? As evoking serious moral issues? As artistically innovative?
    - Do articles or fan criticism discuss the experience of seeing the film? Seeing it with family or friends? Lines at theater or their home viewing experience? (E.g., was the Blu-Ray good? How did their speaker system treat the film, or vice-versa?)
    - Which critical discussions treat the movie as a financial proposition, which as a social experience and phenomenon, which as a work of art?
5. What is your history with the movie? How does the movie fit into your relationships and friendship? How is the movie different from other movies for you?
    - Do you remember how you first found out about the movie? When and where did you watch the movie? In a theater? On TV or cable? As a rental? How long ago was that? When the movie came out?
    - How many times have you watched it since? Alone or with others?Do you talk to other people about the movie, and if so, what do you tell them?
    - Re-watch the movie. You might speed through it and just watch some favorite scenes.

- What feelings does the movie create in you? Does it remind you of other movies?
- How would you describe what you like about the movie? Its speed? Its humor? Its emotion? The characters? Etc.

Questionnaire 1.02 to 1.07 Production Reception, Form Function

In Questionnaire 1.01 Movies, Cinema, and Film, you already did some research on a particular film you're studying.

- You found out some basic information about its production and reception.
- You found some budget information and some critical reception.

The following questions will rely on that information.

1. Look at box office information for the year of the film you're studying. (For instance: return to Box Office Mojo (Links to an external site.) or The Numbers (Links to an external site.) .)

- Find another film that could be an interesting point of comparison.
    - It could be a very different film that made a similar amount of money.
    - Or it could be a similar film that made much less or much more money.
- This is to give you a sense of where the film you're studying fit into the box office patterns of the year it came out.

- *What is this film? How does it compare to the one you're studying? How is that comparison informative? What light does it shed on 'your' film?*

2. You have already looked a bit at the critical reception of a particular film.

- For this Assignment, you will need three critical resources, one of each of the three main types:
    - one journalistic review or article,
    - one academic or scholarly article, and
    - one fan or amateur discussion.
        - This last item can be a comment left somewhere.
        - It could be a Youtube video discussing the film.
        - Just something not associated with a newspaper or magazine.
- How do the critics you found point toform or patterns: e.g.,
    - similarities or contrasts,
    - sudden or gradual changes,
    - bookends--like the beginning and end matching each other.

- Look for sentences in the critical discussions
    - that
        - describe,
        - analyze,
        - interpret, and
        - evaluate.
    - You can find separate examples of each.
    - You can find one or two sentences that mix these together.

- Consider cutting and pasting the original in your reply and using the highlighting tool (or underline, italics, and bold) to mark which words suggest which critical activities.
- Based on your analysis, does one type of activity seem to dominate one mode of criticism?
    - That is: is journalistic criticism more evaluative? Is academic criticism more analytical? Etc.

3. Look in the textbook you've chosen from our recommended list for the following.

- What do the authors consider most important about production and reception?
- How do authors discuss topics like form, pattern, meaning, and function?
- Select one quote for each and include the title, author, year and page number.

4.*Find a single element* of the film you're studying:

- a costume or piece of clothing,
- a color,
- a prop,
- even a word.

See if you can explain how it performs as many of thefunctionsyou've read about:

- making the film cohere together,
- carrying meaning,

- telling a story,
- etc.

Questionnaire 1.08 to 1.14 Reception: Conventions Style

In earlier questionnaires, you did some research on a film you're studying.

- You found some basic facts about it.
- You found another film to compare it to.
- And you found some critical discussions.
    - (In some cases, these weresupplied for you.)

You also have a textbook you've chosen to use for this course. (These are mentioned in theFAQ's.)

1. Uniqueness.

- How is the movie you're analyzing different from other movies you've seen?
    - E.g.,*Star Wars*is a sci-fi film, but other sci fi films make aliens into monsters, and few sci-fi films have princesses.
- How the same?
    - Rescuing the princess may seem to you like*Princess Bride*. The space ships and weapons in*Star Wars*are not so different from those in*Star Trek*.

2. Style, Genre

- Does your film textbook talk about style?
- How does your textbook define style?
- What's its best example of style?
- What does your film textbook say about film genre?

3. Out-of-the-Ordinary.

- Is there a moment in the film you're studying where the style stands out to you?
    - As old-fashioned? Or striking? Or cool?
    - Why do you think you react to the style this way.

4. Dominant Mainstream Style (Realism).

- Is the movie's style more conventional or unconventional?
    - Does the audience see everything they need to see?
    - Does the ending entirely resolve the characters' problems?
    - Is the world of the film clear and definite? Or unclear and ambiguous?
        - As regards what's happening?
        - As regards right and wrong, good and bad?
        - Morally ambiguous?

    - Does the film embrace the idea that society is basically good, fair, and just?
        - Or does the film criticize society as essentially contrary to human happiness?
        - Is it 'normative'? Or 'critical'? How and why?

- How does the moment where the style stands out fit into this dominant realist style?

5. Genre.

- Does the film you're studying fit into a genre?
- What is that genre?
  - If a documentary, are there different styles of documentary?

- Do critics mention it in their reviews, discussions, articles?
  - Find a definition of that genre that discusses at least two of the dimensions of genre:
    - symbols and stories,
    - oppositions,
    - myth,
    - ritual,
    - ideology.

Questionnaire 2.0 to 2.5: Segmentation, Drama, Story, Argument, Poem

In earlier questionnaires, you did some research on a film you're studying.

- You found some basic facts about it.
- You found another film to compare it to.
- And you found some critical discussions.
  - (In some cases, these weresupplied for you.)

You also have a textbook you've chosen to use for this course. (These are mentioned in theFAQ's.)

1. Segmentation.

- How does your textbook describe different kind of sequences and scenes?
    - Provide a single representative quote, complete with the page number.
- Considering the film you're studying....
    - Are there one or two very clear scenes or sequences?
    - Are the chunks mostly unified by space and time? Or something else?
    - Does it have any single shots that could stand alone as scenes?
- If you broke the movie into just three or four chunks, what would those be and why?
- Do critics who wrote about your movie refer to the parts of the movie or significant parts?

2. Film as Drama

- How does your textbook explain dramatic structure--things like protagonist, antagonist, obstacle, etc.
- Can you summarize the film you're studying using six or eight key dramatic terms?
    - You should be able to do this even if it's a documentary.

- What might be good examples in the film of Aristotelean recognition and reversal?
    - These might be for the characters or people or companies represented.
    - They might also be*for the audience*.
- How might you describe the movie or its plot in terms of inciting incident, rising action, climax, resolution, and denouement?
- Does your film have the 'three-act structure' people find so common in Hollywood movies?
- Do critics who write about your movie refer to these elements of dramatic structure or use this terminology?

3. Film as Story

- How does your textbook explain storytelling or narrative?
    - Use one interesting and relevant quote and supply the page number.
- Can you identify differences in the movie you're studying between the story and the plot? That is: between what happens and how it's told?
    - Differences in order? We see earlier events later? Or vice-versa?
    - In duration? Something that takes weeks is speeded up to minutes?
    - In frequency? Something happens once but we see it more--or vice-versa?
- How does the movie control, restrict, or limit information?

        - Is the viewer limited to what specific people or characters know?
        - Is information withheld from the viewer to make the story more compelling?
        - Or does the audience know more than some of the characters?
    - Do critics writing about your movie mention any aspects of storytelling? If so, which? Why do they feel the need to point them out?

4. Film as Story, Poem, Argument.

- If the film seems like a story, how is it an argument or poem?
    - Or if it seems mostly like an argument, how is it a story or poem?
- To consider the film as a poem, consider fast-forwarding or going backwards quickly.
    - Do you notice patterns of color?
    - Does the film use repeated sound elements to form a pattern the way a poem does?
- How does your textbook describe "experimental," "avant-garde," or "abstract" movies?
    - Provide a quote with the page number and explain w hat part of that could apply to the film you're studying?

Questionnaire 3.1 to 3.4: Mise-en-Scene, Cinematography, Performance,

Special Effects

1. Mise-en-Scene and Visual Analysis.

- How does your textbook explainmise-en-scene?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- What is a good (to you) example of mise-en-scene in your textbook?
- Find a clip on Youtube or elsewhere explaining mise-en-scene--preferably less than ten minutes.
- What are the typical and extreme elements of the mise-en-scene in your film? I.e., what you see a lot of, what you see only a little of.
- Consider:
    - sets or locations,
    - lighting,
    - props,
    - costumes,
    - make-up, and
    - the staging of actions.
- Consider also: the range of colors, brightness and darkness.
- What is normal and typical for that genre of film?
- What do critics, reviewers notice or mention about the mise-en-scene?
- What do articles discussing the production of the film mention that bears on mise-en-scene?

2. Performances

- How does your textbook explain performance and acting?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- Are the performances in the film you're analyzing more realistic? Or more exaggerated and stylized?
    - If considering a documentary, how does it seem 'real' and 'not acting'?
    - How are the performances typical for the genre--or exceptional? (For example, in a horror movie, the monster's often has distinct physical movement and speech or vocal sounds--like Frankenstein's monster or Dracula.)
- What performances stand out more in terms of facial expression, voice, and movement?
    - Are some performances more expressive? More inexpressive?
- Does the film you're studying have star performances?
    - What associations do you have with the performers from their other performances?
- Are the roles "types"?
    - E.g., leading man, leading woman, ingenue, juvenile?
    - Are there other character types or stereotypes?
    - They might also be*for the audience*.

3. Cinematography

- What is normal and typical in the cinematography of the film you're studying?
    - E.g., a horror movie might typically be dark and mysterious--yet yours is brightly lit?
    - Or yours might be an exceptional horror movie--one where everything is bright and cheerful....
- What is unusual in the film you're studying?
    - For instance, if there were almost no close-up's except for one.
    - Or the camera never moved except for a few times.
- Consider:
    - camera angles (wider vs. narrower),
    - framing (close-up vs. longshot, etc.)
    - camera position (high vs. low, level vs. 'canted').
- How does the cinematography relate to the genre?

4. Special Effects

- Does your movie have special FX?
    - Why? Serving what purpose?
    - To simulate reality? Does it do that persuasively? Or are the effects obviously fake?
- Can you find any articles or videos on the special FX in the movie?

- Do the FX seem to be camera trickery? Or digital?

5. Functions

- Considering the elements in the questions above, whatfunctionsmight mise-en-scene, performance, cinematography, and FX be playing?
    - E.g., lighting might advance the story or express the character's feelings, etc.

Questionnaire 3.5 to 3.6: Editing, Sound Music

1. Editing Part A

- How does your textbook explain editing?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- What different systems of editing, beyond "continuity editing," does your book list?
- What is a good (to you) example of editing in your textbook?
- Find a clip on Youtube or elsewhere explaining editing--preferably less than ten minutes.
- Considering the film you're analyzing:
    - What are the typical and extreme elements of the editing in your film? I.e., what you see a lot of, what you see only a little of.

- Does your film use continuity editing?:
    - Are there any ruptures, mistakes, shenanigans, variations?
    - Is that what you would expect from this genre or story?
        - For instance, in horror films, monsters might be kept from sight to generate suspense.
        - Or sudden surprising edits may be used to create 'jump scares.'
- Do the reviews or any other articles you have about the movie mention the editing specifically?
    - If so, what do they say?
    - If not, why do you think not?

2. Editing Part B

- Pick a short segment of the movie where the editing is notable.
    - It can be typical for the film or unusual for the film.
- Make a shot list or table listing all the shots.
    - Obviously, try to stick to a segment with a dozen shots or fewer.
    - What patterns do you see? For instance:
        - Is it mostly medium close-up's?
        - Does it begin and end in a similar way?
        - Do you see anything that seems strange or atypical for films of that kind? For instance: a total lack of

establishing shots. Why might the film have been edited that way?

- What is interesting or significant about the segment?
    - How is the segment characteristic of or revealing about the film?
        - E.g., how does the segment part of the film's larger strategies, goals, or ideas?
    - Does the segment use continuity editing--or rupture it? Or does it use some other system or pattern (like "montage")?
    - How does the editing do things like: keep the viewer involved--for instance, evoking interest, sympathy, or suspense on the part of the viewer?

3. Sound Music

- How does your textbook explain sound music?
    - Find a clear quote and share it with the author, title, and page number.
- What is typical for the film in terms of sound and music?
    - Are the sound and music more subjective or objective?
    - Is the music the style you expect?
        - Is it 'movie music' with an orchestra? Or popular songs used to keep the movie lively and familiar?
        - Is the instrumentation and style of the music unusual? E.g., xylophones and

kazoo's instead of violins? Jazz instead of 'movie music'?

- How much of the music is diegetic (coming from the story world) vs. non-diegetic?
    - Why was it done that way--and not some other?
- Is anything else notable about the sound or music?

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General Instructions: Finding Journalistic and Scholarly Discussions

Once you've picked a film which (a) interests you and (b) is available in some convenient way for you to watch, you may search for information about the film itself--or closely related topics. E.g.,

- the film,
- the director,
- the stars,
- other significant cast and crew,
- or
- the genre--e.g., sci-fi, horror, war/combat films, etc.

(You can think of these as widening circles or the rings of a bull's eye or ripples on a pond.)

The following tips might help you find resources on a film title more easily.

- You can apply the same tips to people and roles ("John Smith director") or genres ("combat war film" or "horror film movie").

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resource type	research method	details
To find this...	*...use this...*	*...doing this...*
***journalistic** reviews*	Search on IMDB.com.	On the film's IMDB page, above

		the title choose "MORE," and under "OPINION" choose "External Reviews." IMDB sometimes has reviews from major national daily papers like the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Washington Post*, or *New York Times* reviews: they often have the one published when the movie was first released. RogerEbert.com often has the original review, as well as an update done years later.
scholarly or academic *discussions*	scholar.google.com or LTCC's "Academic Search Complete" or "JSTOR"	Same as above: search the movie title plus director. Or add to the title the word "movie" (so you don't get the novel, for instance). You can also look for the director's or star's name for articles that might address that person and her films.
critical: *video*	a search engine using the "video" filter, or Youtube or Vimeo.com	Sometimes people make videos about a movie. These may espouse a theory or just be a kind of review. These can be interesting critical resources. They might show how 'real people' (not critics, journalists,

		or scholars) receive and think about a movie.
images	Use a search engine such as Google or Bing and choose "Images."	Narrow by image or use image.google.com. Consider adding the word "poster." Sometimes this turns up 'lobby cards,' which are 'landscape' posters (wider than they are high) once displayed in movie theater lobbies. Filter for a larger image size, say bigger than 600px wide. Be aware that different posters are made for different markets/countries.
historical: *interviews trailers*	Use a search engine such as Google or Bing and pick the option for "video." Or just search directly in Youtube.	Search for the movie title or name of the director or star plus the word "interview" or "trailer." Be aware that some trailers are not the original trailers but are actually fan-made. These could be critical resources, as they reflect the maker's thoughts about the film. These could be useful when*compared* to an actual trailer.
screenshots	Use a search engine such as Google or Bing	Sometimes these are used in critical writing, reviews, etc.

	and pick the option for images.	
scenes or clips	Use a search engine such as Google or Bing and pick the option for video. Or search on Youtube.com.	Consider adding the word "clip" or "clips."

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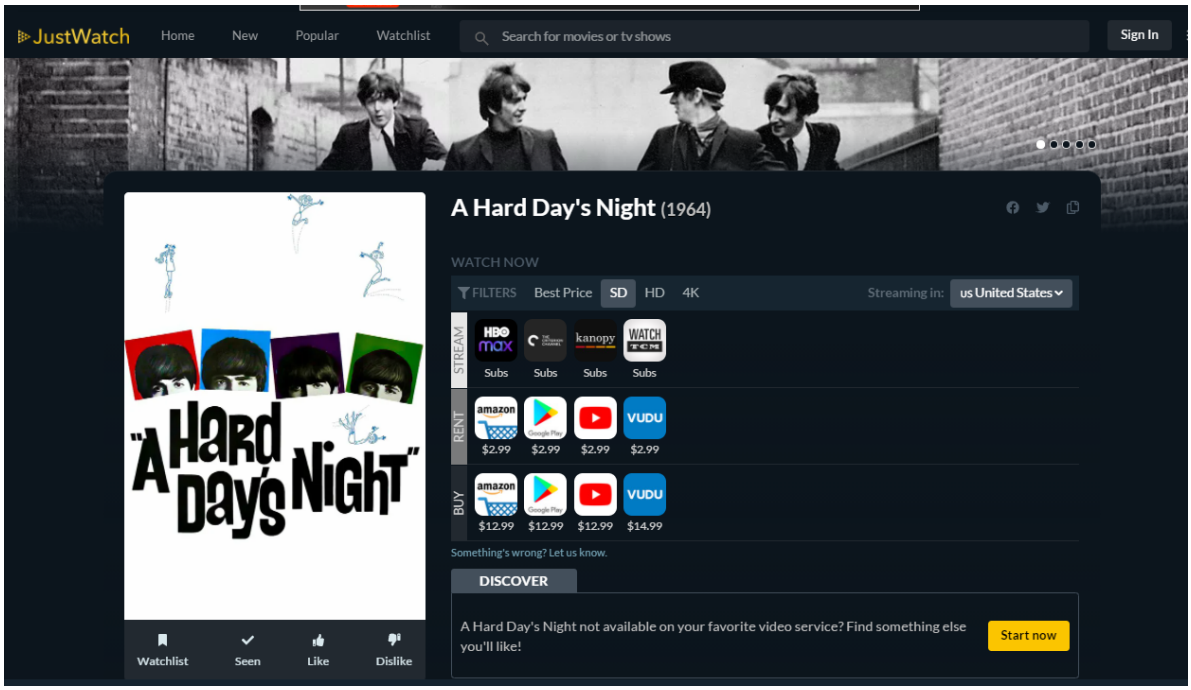
General Instructions: Finding Streaming Movies

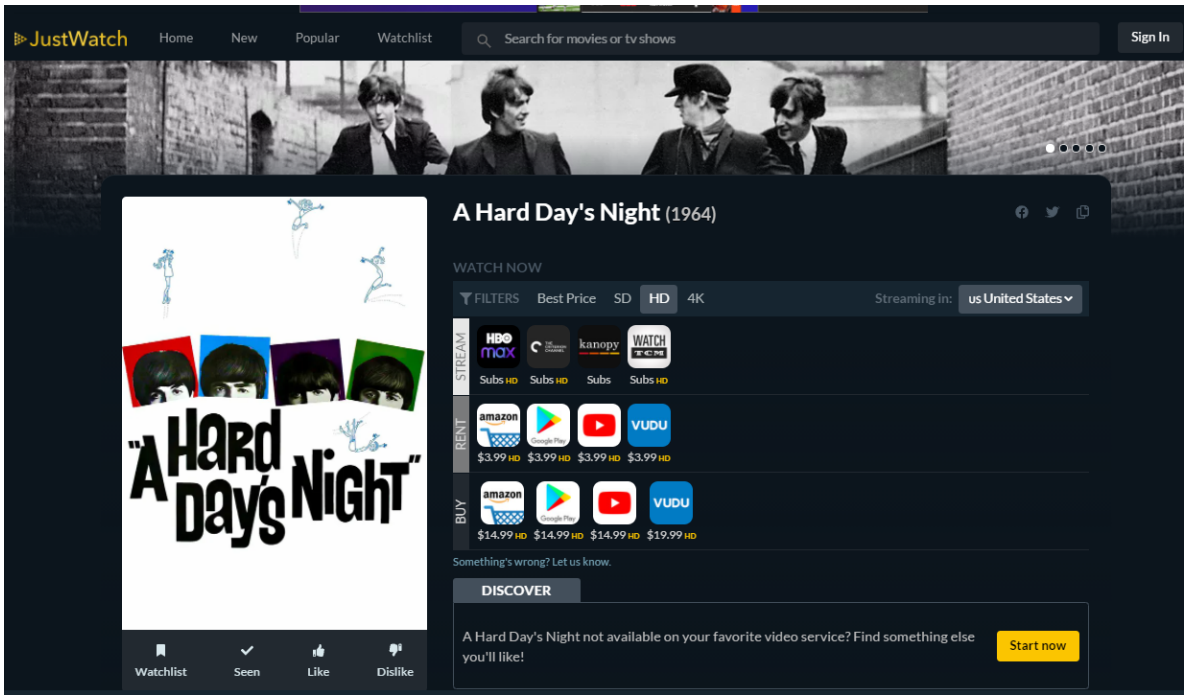
Two sites for finding streaming movies are www.justwatch.com and reelgood.com. (A third, decider, is maybe a bit harder to use.)

A Hard Day's Night, for instance is on both.

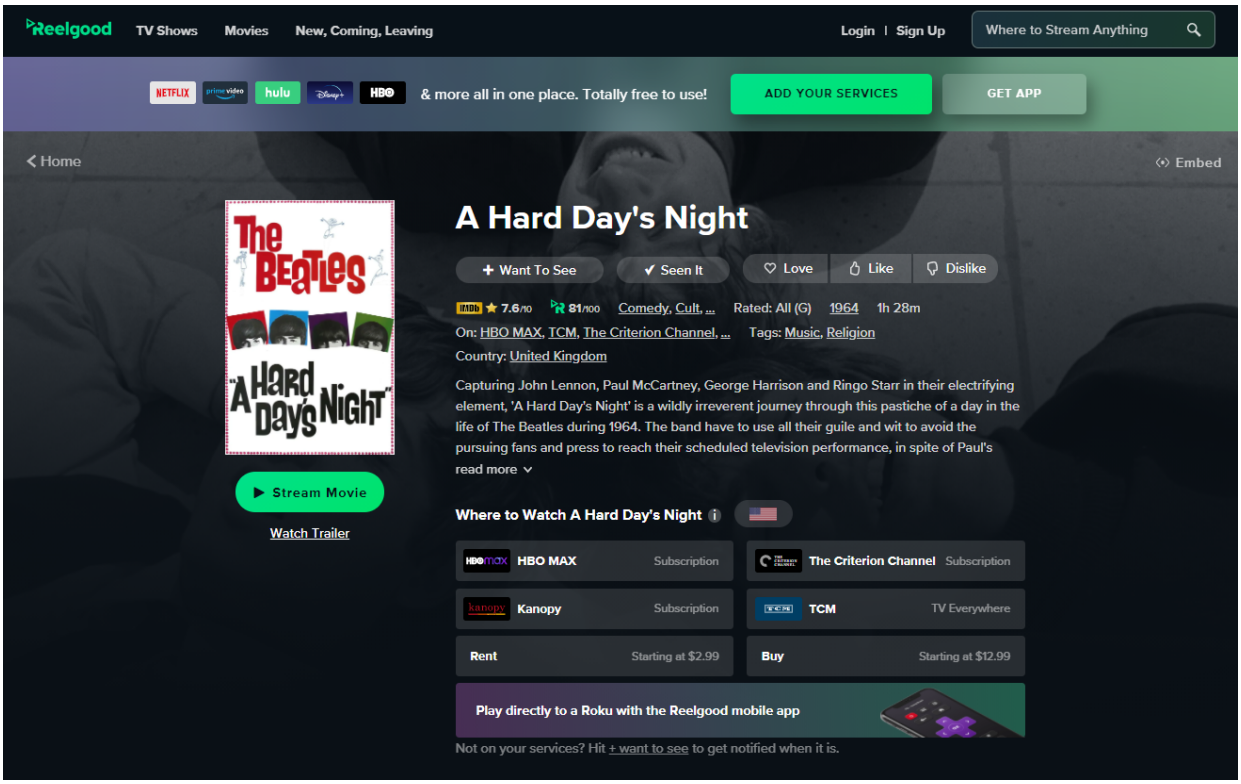
Justwatch.com shows who streams titles and where they can be rented--in SD and HD.

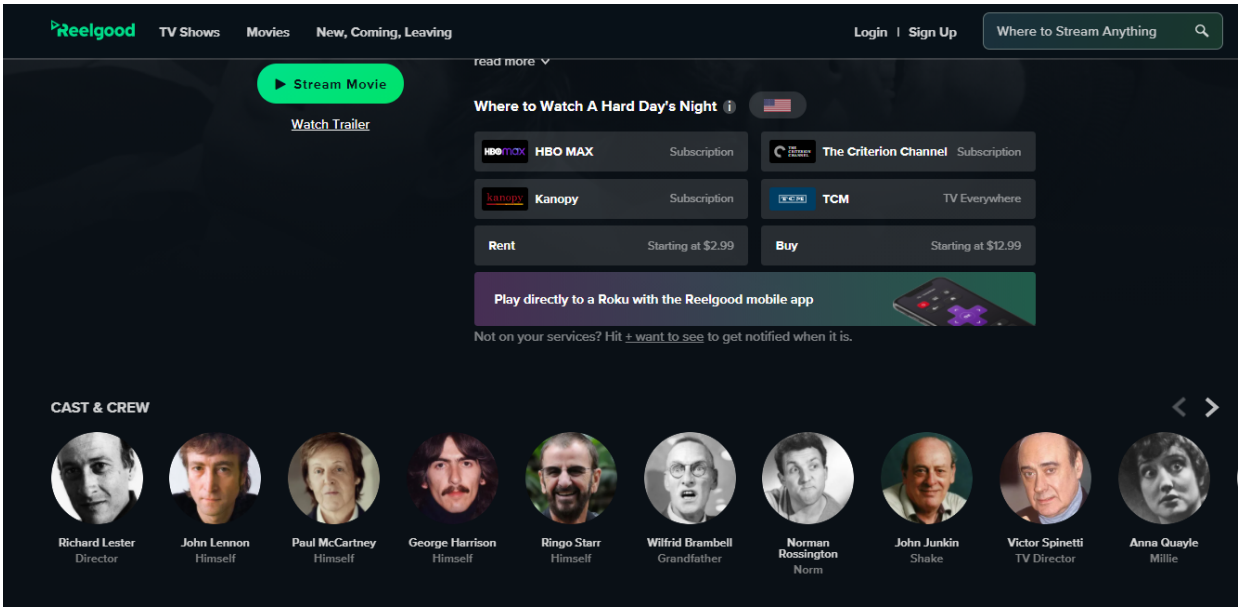
- Note that "Subs" means a subscription service, where a dollar price indicates a rental.
- Some rentals can be streamed for several days, but that's not so useful for this course.



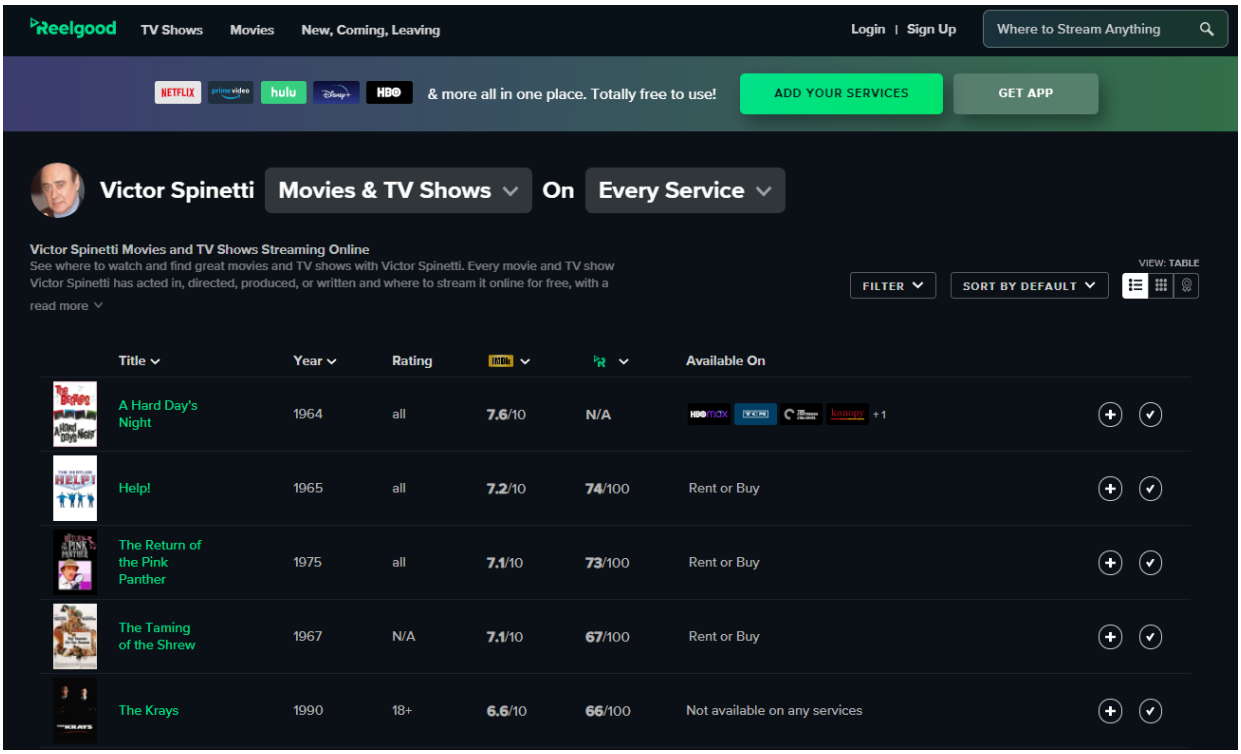


[Reelgood.com seems to let you bring your existing services through it, so you don't have to go to multiple places to see films. And there's an app, too.]


Reelgood
TV Shows
Movies
New, Coming, Leaving
Login | Sign Up
Where to Stream Anything
& more all in one place. Totally free to use!
ADD YOUR SERVICES
GET APP
Home
Embed
A Hard Day's Night
+ Want To See
✓ Seen It
Love
Like
Dislike
7.6/10
81/100
Comedy, Cult, ...
Rated: All (G)
1964
1h 28m
On: HBO MAX, TCM, The Criterion Channel, ...
Tags: Music, Religion
Country: United Kingdom
Capturing John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr in their electrifying element, 'A Hard Day's Night' is a wildly irreverent journey through this pastiche of a day in the life of The Beatles during 1964. The band have to use all their guile and wit to avoid the pursuing fans and press to reach their scheduled television performance, in spite of Paul's
read more
Stream Movie
Watch Trailer
Where to Watch A Hard Day's Night
HBO MAX Subscription
The Criterion Channel Subscription
Kanopy Subscription
TCM TV Everywhere
Rent Starting at $2.99
Buy Starting at $12.99
Play directly to a Roku with the Reelgood mobile app
Not on your services? Hit + want to see to get notified when it is.



If you click on the cast members, you'll get a list of the films they made, and you can then rent or stream one of those.



[If you have a Roku device, Roku has their own search engine.]

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Highly-Regarded Movies: Sample Resources

The Truman Show (1998): Sample Resources

You can find a lot of information about a movie by going to just four pages and searching there.

(1) a web site for numbers like Box Office Mojo or The Numbers;

(2) a web site that pulls together critical voices, professional and amateur, like Rotten Tomatoes or Metacritic,

(3) a scholarly search engine like Google Scholar or LTCC's "Academic Search Complete"

and

(4) Youtube for video clips or interviews.

(1) Box Office Information can be found on

Box Office Mojo

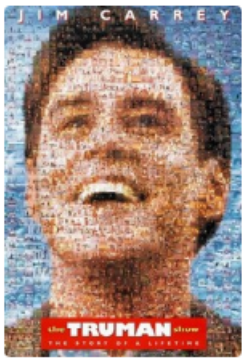
and

The-Numbers.com

(2) Critical reception is often summarized and linked on Rotten Tomatoes and Metacritic.

Rotten Tomatoes.com gives a critical freshness score and audience score, and also a "critical consensus":

> "A funny, tender, and thought-provoking film, The Truman Show is all the more noteworthy for its remarkably prescient vision of runaway celebrity culture and a nation with an insatiable thirst for the private details of ordinary lives."



THE TRUMAN SHOW

PG 1998, Comedy/Drama, 1h 42m

CERTIFIED FRESH 95%

TOMATOMETER
132 Reviews

89%

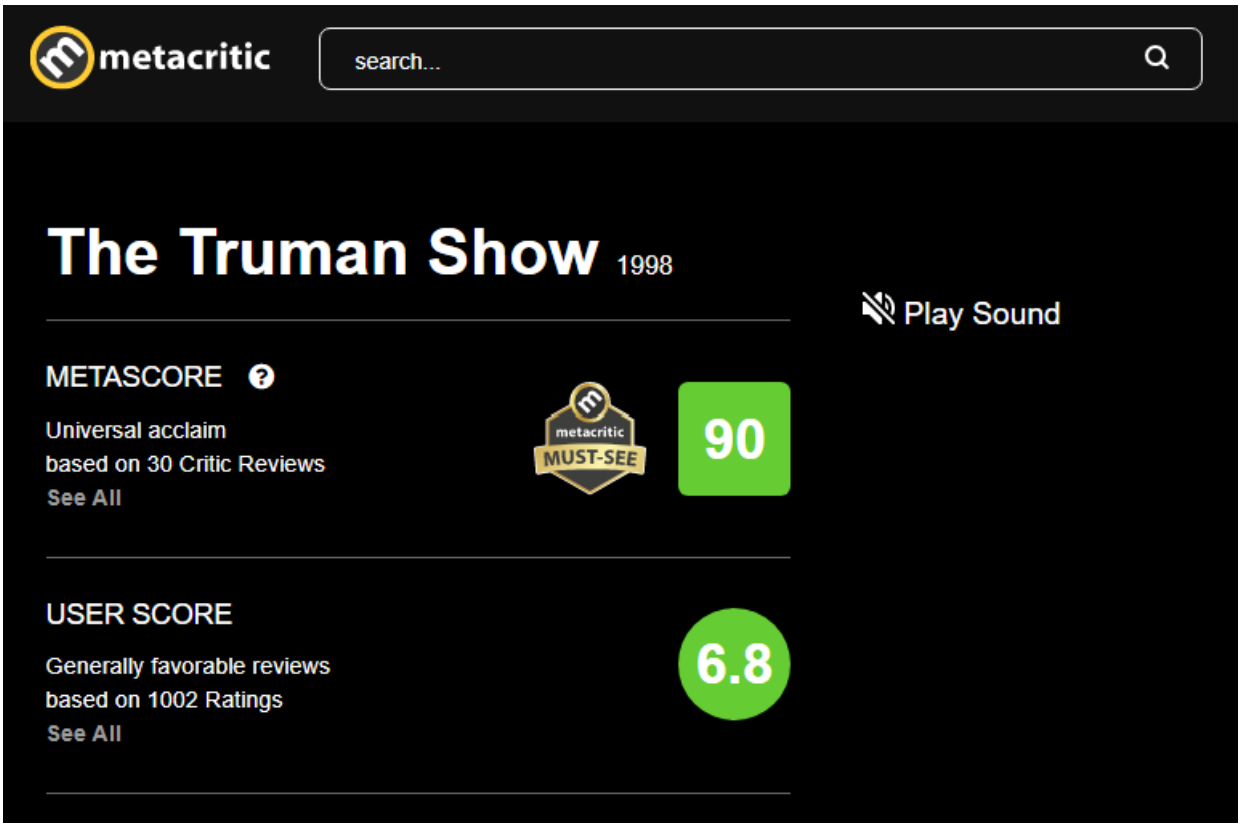
AUDIENCE SCORE
250,000+ Ratings

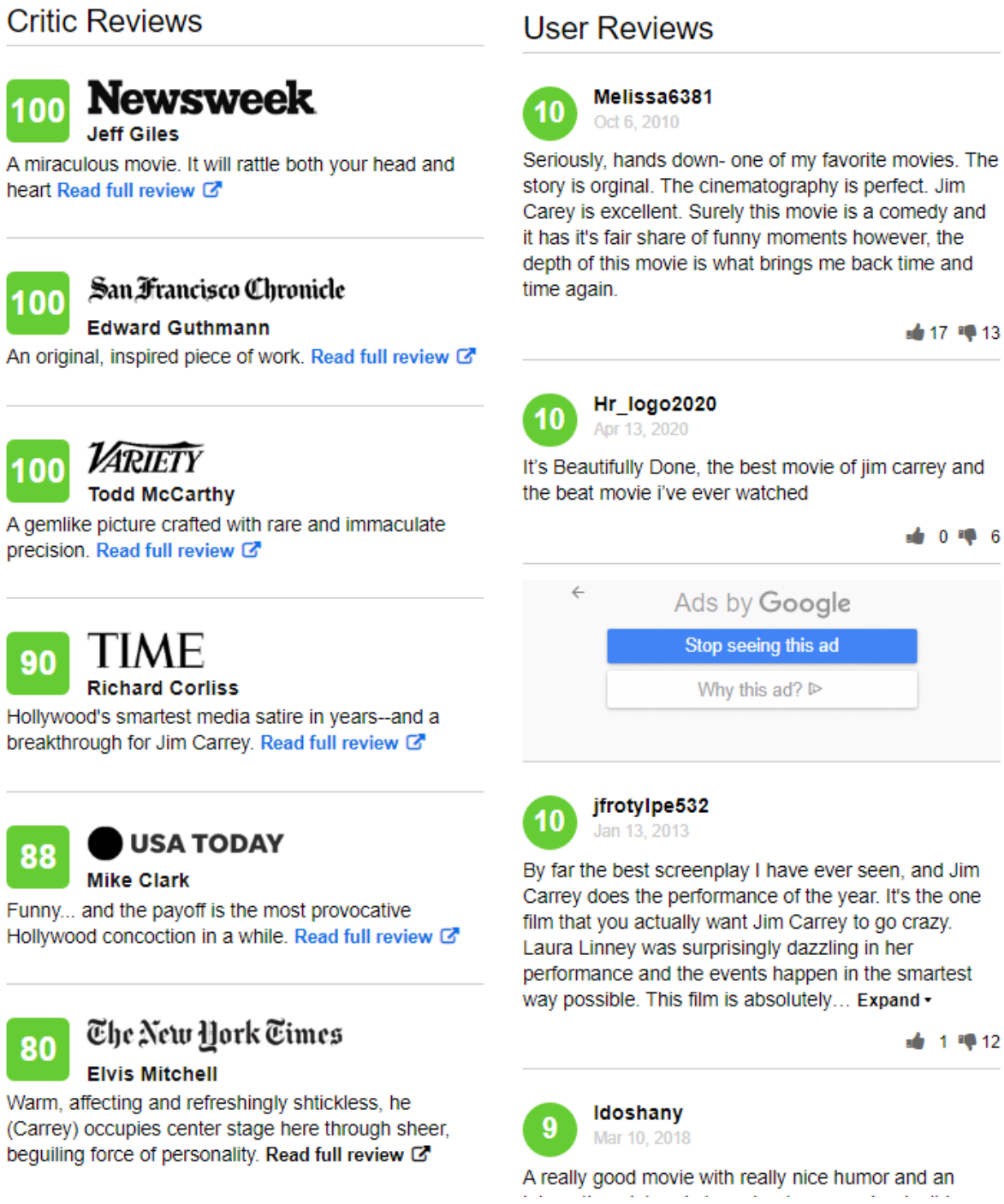
WHAT TO KNOW

CRITICS CONSENSUS

A funny, tender, and thought-provoking film, The Truman Show is all the more noteworthy for its remarkably prescient vision of runaway celebrity culture and a nation with an insatiable thirst for the private details of ordinary lives. Read critic reviews

Metacritic.com also gives scores for critics and audiences plus brief pull quotes from reviews.


metacritic
search...
The Truman Show 1998
Play Sound
METASCORE
Universal acclaim
based on 30 Critic Reviews
See All
metacritic
MUST-SEE
90
USER SCORE
Generally favorable reviews
based on 1002 Ratings
See All
6.8



Critic Reviews

100 Newsweek
Jeff Giles
A miraculous movie. It will rattle both your head and heart Read full review

100 San Francisco Chronicle
Edward Guthmann
An original, inspired piece of work. Read full review

100 VARIETY
Todd McCarthy
A gemlike picture crafted with rare and immaculate precision. Read full review

90 TIME
Richard Corliss
Hollywood's smartest media satire in years--and a breakthrough for Jim Carrey. Read full review

88 USA TODAY
Mike Clark
Funny... and the payoff is the most provocative Hollywood concoction in a while. Read full review

80 The New York Times
Elvis Mitchell
Warm, affecting and refreshingly shtickless, he (Carrey) occupies center stage here through sheer, beguiling force of personality. **Read full review**

User Reviews

10 **Melissa6381**
Oct 6, 2010
Seriously, hands down- one of my favorite movies. The story is orginal. The cinematography is perfect. Jim Carey is excellent. Surely this movie is a comedy and it has it's fair share of funny moments however, the depth of this movie is what brings me back time and time again.
17 13

10 **Hr_logo2020**
Apr 13, 2020
It's Beautifully Done, the best movie of jim carrey and the beat movie i've ever watched
0 6

Ads by Google
Stop seeing this ad
Why this ad?

10 **jfrotylpe532**
Jan 13, 2013
By far the best screenplay I have ever seen, and Jim Carrey does the performance of the year. It's the one film that you actually want Jim Carrey to go crazy. Laura Linney was surprisingly dazzling in her performance and the events happen in the smartest way possible. This film is absolutely… **Expand**
1 12

9 **ldoshany**
Mar 10, 2018
A really good movie with really nice humor and an

Sample Review Quotes linked from Rotten Tomatoes

The *Hollywood Reporter* examines moves from the perspective of the film industry: notably, predicting how much money the film will make.

> In many ways a logical extension of MTV's*Real World*— not to mention the groundbreaking '70s saga of the Loud Family — the show in question concerns one Truman Burbank (Jim Carrey in the breakout role he's been waiting for), the unwitting star of a 30-years-and-counting, 24-hour-a-day broadcast of his entire existence.
>
> Like screen naifs George Bailey, Chance Gardner and Forrest Gump before him, Truman's a wide-eyed babe in the woods whose sheltered existence is about to receive a rude awakening.
>
> The highly satisfying picture should emerge as one of Paramount's best-reviewed, higher-grossing releases of the year. But Weir's avoidance, however admirable, of playing up to audience emotions ultimately robs*Truman*of attaining*Gump*-sized results.

Critic Peter Travers in Rolling Stonesees the film as an emotionally powerful satire that may be "too smart" for audiences.

> "Sayonara" to*Seinfeld*and hello to*The Truman Show,*a movie – and a great movie, by the way – about a television series in which the "selfishness, self-absorption, immaturity and greed" that Jerry, Elaine, George and Kramer were slammed for in the last episode don't exist. Except behind the scenes. Jim Carrey has the role of his career as Truman Burbank, the unwitting star of a TV show that has trained 5,000 hidden cameras on him since his birth thirty years ago. Everyone in Truman's life – parents, lovers, best friend, wife – is an actor. Truman's seemingly idyllic world on the island of Seahaven is really a giant, dome-encased studio controlled by I Christof (Ed Harris), a beret-wearing director who has made his name as a I televisionary by invading Truman's privacy seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. Thanks to the

global audience that hangs on Truman's every move, his life is a cruel joke, with Truman the only one not in on it.

....

Weir shows a mastery of tone as he shifts the film from acute social satire to an often penetrating meditation on the forces that control our existence. As Truman discerns the daily patterns that bind him — don't try this at home or you might think you're trapped in your own TV show — he also works up the courage to defy them....

In the film's most wrenching scene, Truman pours his heart out to Marlon, his trusted friend since grade school. Emmerich, a fresh new talent, invests this good-natured beer guzzler with a mesmerizing edge of danger. Weir never lets us inside the thoughts of Marlon or the other hired hands on the show: Are they appalled by their manipulation of Truman or willing to crush his feelings for fame and a fat paycheck? There is, however, no doubt about the impact of the sham on Truman, and eloquent stillness as he reacts to Truman's betrayal is quietly devastating. Carrey triumphs in a hilarious and heartfelt performance that reveals an uncommon sensitivity and grace. The question is: Can audiences stand the shock?

If not, it's their loss. The bogus buzz around Hollywood is that*The Truman Show*will prove to be too smart and too small-scale for its own box-office good. Screw that. Even the crunch of a giant lizard or the deep impact of Armageddon can't stomp out something this unique and unforgettable. Go, Truman.

Janet Maslin's NY Times reviewfocuses on the talent of individuals: the star, the writer, the director--even the cinematographer.

Jim Carrey's instantly iconic performance as the sweet, unsuspecting Truman will give his career deserved new impetus, but the real star of "The Truman Show" is its premise.

....

"The Truman Show" has an inspired screenplay by Andrew Niccol, whose own "Gattaca" had the same transfixing sci-fi intensity. Each shows a man living a phenomenally intricate lie. (The hero of "Gattaca" conceals his genetic makeup.)

But "The Truman Show" unfolds on a much grander scale. The sparklingly antiseptic island community called Seahaven (actually Seaside, Fla.) is part of a huge stage set. It encompasses sun, moon, forest, ocean, bridge and about 5,000 hidden cameras that follow Truman everywhere he goes.

....

Weir, known for the thoughtfulness and idiosyncrasy of his films and for guiding stellar actors into some of their best work, must handle the tricky job of gradually poking holes in this deception with optimum timing. What should the audience know about Truman's situation, and when should the audience know it?

....

"The Truman Show," which tells such an engrossing story that it amounts to the best virtual beach book of the season, draws its suspense from Truman's rising disillusionment and anger. That truly makes Carrey the ideal actor for the role, since his beaming affability so often conveys an edge of secret fury.

Warm, affecting and refreshingly shtickless, he occupies center stage here through sheer, beguiling force of personality. And Carrey is charismatic enough to make Trumania a nearly plausible conceit. He intensifies ordinary emotions so powerfully that perhaps this guy's Warholian 15 minutes, on a television show of halfway satirical blandness, could have lasted 30 years.

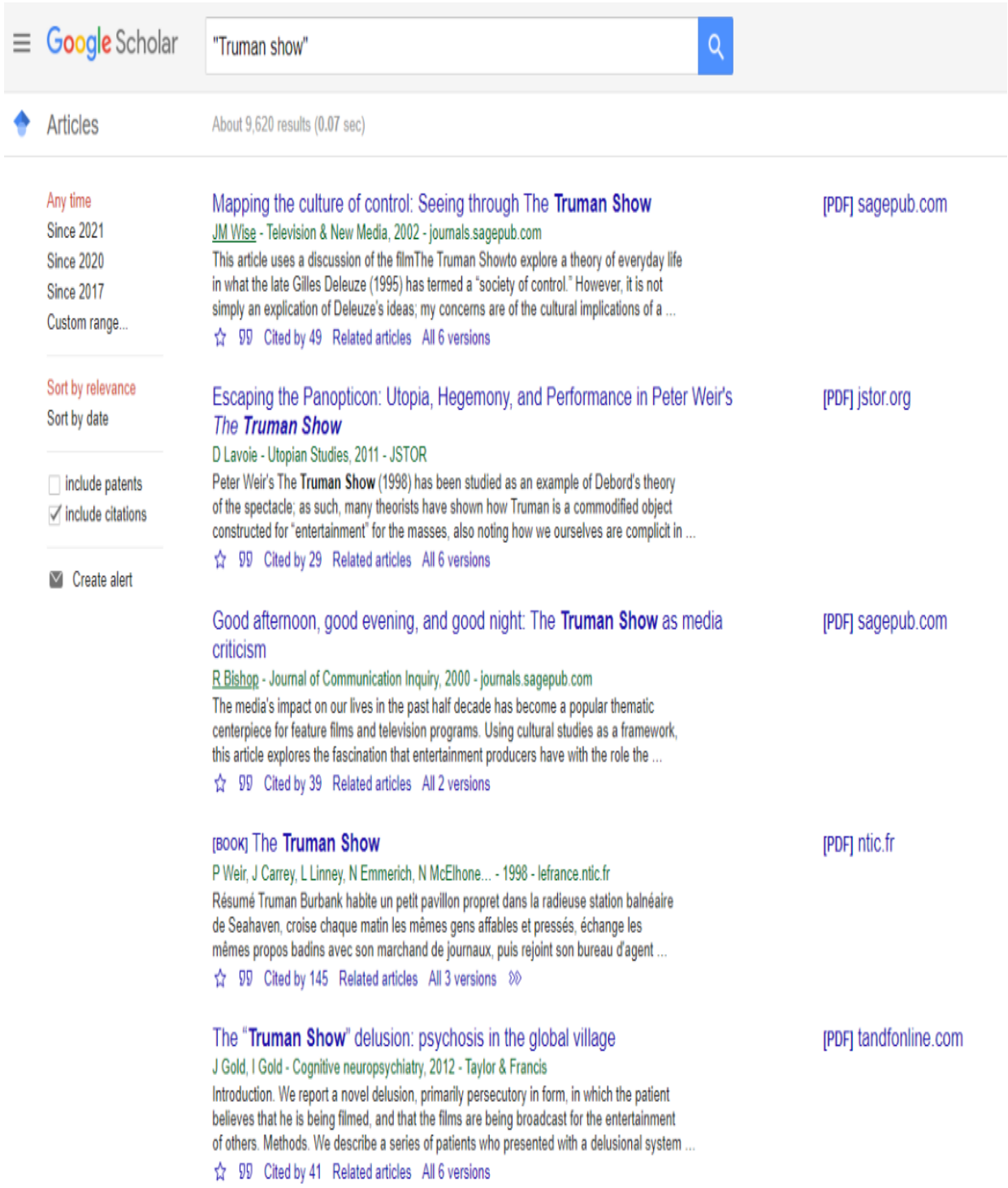
But the public fascination with Truman Burbank, like the horizon around Seahaven, doesn't quite lead anywhere.

....

Once its premise is set forth, ready-made for easy pontification, "The Truman Show" doesn't go on to echo the prophetic intuitiveness of "Network" or even send up the lurid voyeurism of popular culture today. The latter part of the film, depicting Truman's rebellion and providing him with a perfect final line, is much more conventionally conceived than its splendid start.

Beyond Ms. Linney, whose dazzling domestic falseness is one of the film's most resonant ingredients, the major players around Truman include radiant Natascha McElhone as the sweetheart who got away (under suitably bizarre circumstances), Holland Taylor as Truman's actressy mother and Noah Emmerich as the best friend who shows up to deliver product plugs for a certain brand of beer. Peter Biziou's cinematography envelops all of them in bright color and flawlessly unnatural scenery.

(3) For academic articles, Google Scholar (scholar.google.com) is a good resource.


Google Scholar
"Truman show"
Articles
About 9,620 results (0.07 sec)
Any time
Since 2021
Since 2020
Since 2017
Custom range...
Sort by relevance
Sort by date
include patents
include citations
Create alert
Mapping the culture of control: Seeing through The Truman Show
[PDF] sagepub.com
JM Wise - Television & New Media, 2002 - journals.sagepub.com
This article uses a discussion of the filmThe Truman Showto explore a theory of everyday life in what the late Gilles Deleuze (1995) has termed a "society of control." However, it is not simply an explication of Deleuze's ideas; my concerns are of the cultural implications of a ...
Cited by 49 Related articles All 6 versions
Escaping the Panopticon: Utopia, Hegemony, and Performance in Peter Weir's The Truman Show
[PDF] jstor.org
D Lavoie - Utopian Studies, 2011 - JSTOR
Peter Weir's The Truman Show (1998) has been studied as an example of Debord's theory of the spectacle; as such, many theorists have shown how Truman is a commodified object constructed for "entertainment" for the masses, also noting how we ourselves are complicit in ...
Cited by 29 Related articles All 6 versions
Good afternoon, good evening, and good night: The Truman Show as media criticism
[PDF] sagepub.com
R Bishop - Journal of Communication Inquiry, 2000 - journals.sagepub.com
The media's impact on our lives in the past half decade has become a popular thematic centerpiece for feature films and television programs. Using cultural studies as a framework, this article explores the fascination that entertainment producers have with the role the ...
Cited by 39 Related articles All 2 versions
[BOOK] The Truman Show
[PDF] ntic.fr
P Weir, J Carrey, L Linney, N Emmerich, N McElhone... - 1998 - lefrance.ntic.fr
Résumé Truman Burbank habite un petit pavillon propret dans la radieuse station balnéaire de Seahaven, croise chaque matin les mêmes gens affables et pressés, échange les mêmes propos badins avec son marchand de journaux, puis rejoint son bureau d'agent ...
Cited by 145 Related articles All 3 versions
The "Truman Show" delusion: psychosis in the global village
[PDF] tandfonline.com
J Gold, I Gold - Cognitive neuropsychiatry, 2012 - Taylor & Francis
Introduction. We report a novel delusion, primarily persecutory in form, in which the patient believes that he is being filmed, and that the films are being broadcast for the entertainment of others. Methods. We describe a series of patients who presented with a delusional system ...
Cited by 41 Related articles All 6 versions

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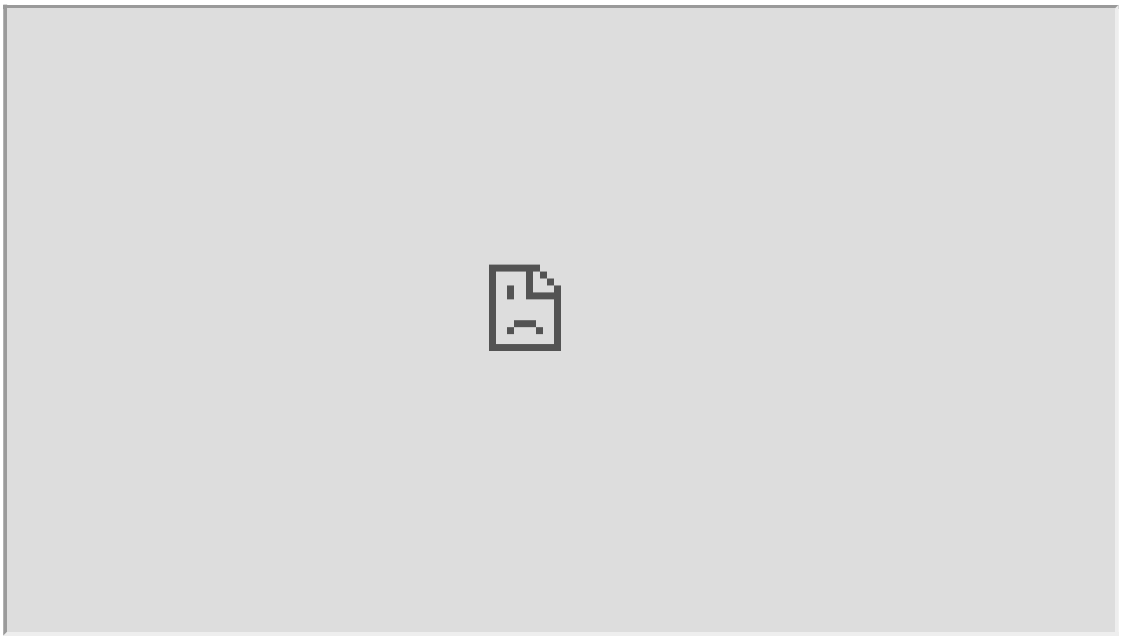
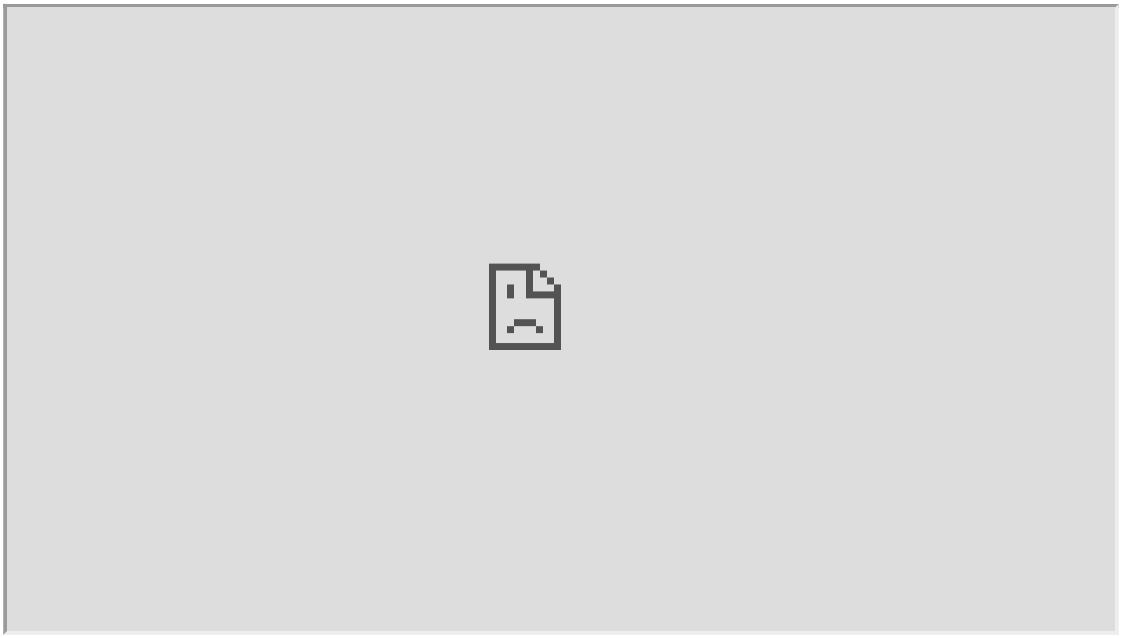
- File utopianstudies.22.1.0052.pdf could not be included in the ePub document. Please see separate zip file for access.
- File 0196859900024001002.pdf could not be included in the ePub document. Please see separate zip file for access.

(4) Video Clips and Interviews

And finally, a playlist of clips from the Movieclips channel can sometimes be found on on Youtube.



And you can also search Youtube for the movie title plus the word "interviews" to find things like this:



(Ed Harris replaced Dennis Hopper during shooting?!)

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Resources: Which Resources Are 'Scholarly' or 'Academic'?

What Are Scholars Doing?

- Scholars carry on respectful, accurate conversations, pointing to each other's work and building on each other to make something larger.
- They use a precise vocabulary and technical terms, as well as some 'insider' phrasing.
- Their goal is to offer an original argument that is relevant and powerful. This argument must be
    - closely reasoned,
    - supported by facts, and
    - tightly embedded in existing conversations by other scholars.

Scholarly Writing Is Different from Journalistic Writing.

As a college student and college graduate, you should be able to recognize and distinguish scholarly or academic writing from journalism.

- Scholarly resources are written by scholars (typically professors) for other scholars.
- Journalistic resources are written for the general public.

Popular or "vernacular" publications include blog posts, Youtube videos that are not professionally produced. They are made by fans for other fans. They are neither connected with universities, nor with magazines.

- In this course, you are blogging in a scholarly but way but on a blogging platform--sort of a hybrid.

	Scholarly	**Journalistic**
These articles...	...appear in specialized journals which may even have "journal" in the title.	...appear in newspapers or magazines
The authors...	...are usually professors.	...are professional journalists, critics, or writers.
They are written...	...for an audience of other scholars and often use very specialized terminology.	...for a general audience and take care to explain any specialized terminology.
These articles...	...almost always include references at the end and/or footnotes.	...seldom use footnotes or references.
The writers...	...are often identified by the university where they work and their other	...are identified by their affiliation with the newspaper or journal, or by

	scholarly publications.	other writing or professional credits.

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About the Focused Essay

Analogy

You see a flower and say "it's beautiful."

I look at the same flower and say "it stinks."

What's going on there?

- Maybe you like the appearance, but I'm reacting to the smell.
- That may be my preference.
- Or I may share that preference with others.

This is a question of **evaluation**: is a thing good or bad?

- It can also be called a **judgment**: a decision, this is that, she is innocent, he is guilty, she is tall, he is short.
    - If it's about art or beauty, it can be called an **aesthetic judgment.**

Why Do These People Respond to This Film in This Way?

In a certain kind of critical essay, that's what you will be doing: *trying to connect the response to a film to a 'cause.'*

- What does the response tell you about the film?
- What does it tell you about the people responding?

A film gets made.

- How and why?
    - To make money, probably. But for other reasons too.
- Why is the film the way it is?
    - Why does it look and sound this way--and not some other?
- Critics and audiences 'receive' the movie: experience it, respond to it.
    - *Why is the response or reception the way it is?*
        - Perhaps the filmmakers wanted to make a different kind of science fiction film.
        - And the audiences and critics responded: "yeah, it's not for us."

The Assignment.

- Using basic information about production and reception, try to connect the critical and audience response to the film you're studying with the film itself:
    - institutions of how films are produced and received;
    - linear structures that tell a story, present a drama, imply an argument, or make a sort of poem or pattern; and
    - a movie's techniques: mise-en-scene, performance, cinematography, FX, editing, and sound.
- How do those receiving the film *describe* it?
- What is their *experience* of the film?

    - Excitement? Laughter? Puzzlement? Boredom?
- Do writers *analyze* the filmby breaking it into pieces or elements?
- Do they *interpret* its meanings?

Try to:

- connect an experience of a movie (yours, one you have read about)
- to a cause: something about the movie or the way people watch movies.

People experience this thing in this way--why?

In other terms: 'explain' something about the reception and/or critical response to the film you have chosen.

- Was it popular at the box office? Did it win awards? Did critics praise it?
- What did critics say about it?
- Based on the film's narrative and dramatic structure (etc.),
- its use of techniques from mise-en-scene to editing and sound,
- why did critics react that way?

(See the Questionnaire Omnibus for all the topics,

- What about the film made them admire and praise it--or question or criticize it?
- What do their reactions reveal about the mindset and shared assumptions of critics?
- For example, if they admired a film's complexity, that suggests 'complexity' is good (in the minds of critics).

- But if they found the film 'too complicated,' that suggests simplicity is better. Or there's a balance.
- By looking at the critical reception of the film, AND the film itself, what can you say about why some films are more admired than others?
- Does every aspect of a film need to be exceptional?
- Or are some films admired for one or two elements?
- Are certain meanings considered 'better' than others?
- E.g., socially critical meanings?

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Habits To Develop

People who do good work acquire habits that makes their work good.

- They dot the i's and cross the t's.
- They clean as they go.
- They keep their tools clean and sharp and their work area tidy and organized.

And they do these things *routinely*.

People with no routines or habits only do good work by chance.

- They can have no design or purpose because they have no foundation which allows them to plan that design or execute that purpose.

Excellence, in short, is a habit.

Habits: Briefly

Scholarly Habits: Briefly

- Scholars engage in conversations with each other.
- They build on others' work, give credit for that work, refer to it, quote it, and summarize it accurately and fairly.

Writerly Habits: Briefly

Writers focus what they're saying and present it cleanly and elegantly.

- They draw attention to what they're saying, not themselves.
- The occasion for writing is having something to say.
- They make sure their work can be found by those interested and accessed by everyone regardless of their abilities.

By practicing these habits, they will become ingrained--and you will be that much closer to excellence.

And if these habits do not turn out to be useful to you, the practice of acquiring habits that lead to excellence should be useful to you in other domains.

The Habits in More Detail

1. Scholarly Habits: Details

Scholars carry on respectful, accurate conversations, pointing to each other's work and building on each other to make something larger.

- **Recognize** and distinguish scholarly vs. non-scholarly work--i.e., journalistic or popular writing.*
- **Find and engage** with existing discussions.
- **Quote and summarize** them fairly.

- **Cite** others work and **link** to it when possible.
- **Add value.**
    - *Focus* the topic or *combine* topics.
    - *Agree, disagree, or qualify* with others: your POINT will be an ARGUMENT.

*Scholarly vs. Journalistic Writing

- Scholarly resources are written by scholars (typically professors) for other scholars.
- Journalistic resources are written for the general public.

	Scholarly	**Journalistic**
These articles...	...appear in specialized journals which may even have "journal" in the title.	...appear in newspapers or magazines
The authors...	...are usually professors.	...are professional journalists, critics, or writers.
They are written...	...for an audience of other scholars and often use very specialized terminology.	...for a general audience and take care to explain any specialized terminology.
These articles...	...almost always include references at the end and/or footnotes.	...seldom use footnotes or references.
The writers...	...are often identified by the university where they work and their other scholarly publications.	...are identified by their affiliation with the newspaper or journal, or by other writing or professional credits.

2. Writerly Habits: Details

(a) Put Your Ideas and Voice First.

- **Have a focused main point.**
    - Try to put your point first. Don’t summarize what everyone else says then add yourself as an afterthought.
    - Make sure everything you write connects to your main point.

- **State your point without saying you are stating it or pointing to yourself: no, “I will argue,” “I think,” etc.**
    - We’re reading your work. Your name is on it. It’s redundant to say “I think.”
    - If you didn’t think it, you wouldn’t have written it.
- **The occasion of your writing is your having something to say**: don't say "I was asked to write this paper," or "for this week's assignment."

(b) Be Specific, Accurate, and Interesting.

- **Locate at least one or two of your key terms.**
    - Where did it come from?
    - What is it like and unlike?
    - What did it lead to?
    - These can also be called: parents, siblings, and children.
        - Not:"I will be writing about tortoises."

        - Instead: "Attention to endangered species often focuses on cute furry mammals. Many kinds of tortoises also face extinction, but they're not cute, not furry, and not mammals. Tortoises are a kind of turtle, and turtles are reptiles."
- **Use labels that are specific, accurate, and interesting.** "Labels" includes: headlines, subheadlines, and captions. For specficity, e.g.:
    - "Some Stuff Happened": WEAK
    - "Some Bad Stuff Happened": STILL WEAK
    - "Fire Destroys Building": OK but general
    - "Three-Alarm Fire Destroys Dog Treat Warehouse": excellent.
- Or:
    - "Food-Court Taco Bell Not as Good, Area Man Finds": not surprising or noteworthy (via *The Onion*)
    - "Dog Bites Man": unsurprising
    - "Man Bites Dog": more surprising

(c) Make Your Work Discoverable, Readable, Durable, and Accessible.

- **Make your work discoverable**: e.g., in WordPress use categories and tags.
- **Use live links**, not the text for a url the user must copy and paste.
    - NOT: https://en.support.wordpress.com/posts/categories-vs-tags/
- **Hide long ugly url's** behind a description of what's at that site.
    - NOT: https://en.support.wordpress.com/posts/categories-vs-tags/
    - NOT: link

    - INSTEAD: In WordPress, use categories and tags.
- **Future-proof your work.** Web sites come and go and get re-organized. Links break.
    - So download images and re-upload to WordPress, Blackboard, Canvas, etc.
- **Make your work accessible.** So visually-impaired readers browsing the web can access your work:
    - use h2, h3, and h4 tags for headings so screen reading software can navigate the page effectively;
    - use meaningful alt text for images so screen readers can describe what they are;
    - try to use video clips that are captioned.
    - These accessibility tips are here, among others.

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Dossiers

There are dossiers of resources for each of the three films:

DOSSIER for Super Size Me

DOSSIER for Pan's Labyrinth

DOSSIER for Monty Python and the Holy Grail

This week you might have to find some additional resources, but it shouldn't be too time-consuming.

Free Film Textbooks

Don't forget, there's a free film textbook you can use for this course: Moving Pictures: An Introduction to Cinema.

There is also a more abstruse textbook that I stumbled across as a free pdf: Cinema Studies: Key Concepts.

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DOSSIER for Super Size Me

Critical Resources

academic/scholarly

- Visual argument in *Super Size Me* and another film. (A pdf can be downloaded.)
- *Anticorporate argument and rhetoric in* *Super Size Me*. (A pdf can be downloaded.)
- Ethical issues in contemporary documentaries. (A pdf can be downloaded.)

journalistic/popular

- Roger Ebert reviews *Super Size Me*--and discusses some of what went on around its release.
- Buzz about the film from Sundance.
- *The Onion*'s non-humorous review.

personal/vernacular

    - Metacritic user reviews.
    - A fan with 52 subscribers created a two-minute summary that has 50k+ views.

Historical Resources

financial info

- Box Office Mojo's numbers for Super Size Me.
    - *The Master and Commander* earned a bit more than *Super Size Me*, and
    - *Girl with a Pearl Earring* earned a bit less.
    - In short, a successful documentary earns somewhere between a failed blockbuster and a successful art film.

news about

- McDonald's changes its menu because of the film.
- Spurlock's sequel faced challenges finding an audience because of the filmmaker's acceptance of responsibility for his own #metoo moments.

interviews

- A brief interview with the director.
- Interviews about the sequel.

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DOSSIER for Pan's Labyrinth

Critical Resources

academic/scholarly

- The antifascist aesthetics of *Pan's Labyrinth* (with pdf download).
- Narrative desire and disobedience in *Pan's Labyrinth* (with pdf download).

journalistic/popular

- Roger Ebert's review from when the movie came out.
- *The New York Times* review.
- PBS uses the film to make a video to teach people what film criticism is.

personal/vernacular

  - Screenrant compares social messages in ten fantasy and horror films.
  - One of many videos explaining the film.
  - Nerdwriter1interprets the film as a fairy tale in this video essay.
  - Bookish theories gives another video essay interpreting the film in light of fairy tales.

financial info

- On a budget of $19M, the film made $83M worldwide. (Promotional costs in the U.S. alone can easily equal the film's budget.)
- The film's box office.
- The Numbers looks at the Monty Python franchise.
- Insider looks at the box office numbers.

interviews

- Two actors recall working on the film.
- Actor Doug Jones discussed working on the film.

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